

THE HISTORY OF ROCK

1970

A MONTHLY TRIP THROUGH MUSIC'S
GOLDEN YEARS **THIS ISSUE: 1970**



STARRING...

BLACK SABBATH

"I'm not trying to say we're angels"

PINK FLOYD

DEREK & THE DOMINOS

LEONARD COHEN

JONI MITCHELL

SANDY DENNY

ELTON JOHN

CSNY

FREE

PLUS! NICO | VIV STANSHALL | ZEPPELIN | SOFT MACHINE | WHO | STONES

1970

MONTH BY MONTH



Welcome to 1970

A NEW DECADE brings re-evaluation for the stars of the 1960s. It says much about their qualities that they knew when moods were changing and their influence might be changing with them. Pete Townshend this year is humble. Mick Jagger wants to keep on the move. Paul McCartney, meanwhile, breaks up The Beatles.

Jimi Hendrix prefaces his performance at the summer's Isle Of Wight festival with a *Melody Maker* interview. In it he states that one musical era "started by The Beatles" is over, and that he is working on new music that will play a part in the coming era. "Jimi Hendrix will be there," he says.

As much as it is about endings, though, 1970 has some startling new beginnings. The spectacular rise of our cover stars Black Sabbath is one such. The massive impact made by Free another. Both bands take blues purism and rewire it—along the way finding completely new audiences.

Making sense of the changing times were the writers of the *New Musical Express* and *Melody Maker*. This is the world of *The History Of Rock*, a monthly magazine which reaps the benefits of their extraordinary journalism for the reader decades later, one year at a time. In the pages of this sixth issue, dedicated to 1970, you will find verbatim articles from frontline staffers, compiled into long and illuminating reads. Missed one? You can find out how to rectify that on page 144.

What will still surprise the modern reader is the access to, and the sheer volume of, material supplied by the artists who are now the giants of popular culture. Now, a combination of wealth, fear and lifestyle would conspire to keep reporters at a rather greater length from the lives of musicians.

Sadly, Jimi Hendrix didn't make it much further into the new decade. Otherwise, representatives from *New Musical Express* and *Melody Maker* are where it matters. Tea with Leonard Cohen. Tomato sandwiches with Mick Jagger. Under canvas at the Isle Of Wight.

Join them there. There's a new day dawning.

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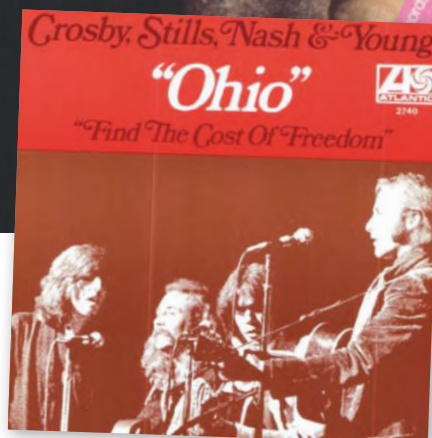
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THE HISTORY OF
ROCK

Time Inc. (UK) Ltd, 8th Floor, Blue Fin Building, 110 Southwark St, London SE1 0SU | **EDITOR** John Mulvey, whose favourite song from 1970 is *Move On Up* by Curtis Mayfield **DEPUTY EDITOR** John Robinson *Fairies Wear Boots* by Black Sabbath **ART EDITOR** Lora Findlay *Diamond Day* by Vashti Bunyan **PRODUCTION EDITOR** Mike Johnson *Oh I Wept* by Free **ART DIRECTOR** Marc Jones *Patches* by Clarence Carter **DESIGNER** Becky Redman *Sugar Magnolia* by The Grateful Dead **PICTURE EDITOR** Kimberly Kriete *Winterlude* by Bob Dylan **COVER PHOTO** Chris Walter **THANKS TO** Helen Spivak **MARKETING** Charlotte Treadaway **SUBSCRIPTIONS** Sonja Zeven **PUBLISHING DIRECTOR** Ed Beale **COVERS PRINTED BY** Polestar Wheatons **TEXT PRINTED BY** Polestar Chantry | WWW.UNCUT.CO.UK

Time Inc.





1970

JANUARY — MARCH

NICO, SOFT MACHINE,
BLACK SABBATH, CSNY,
LED ZEPPELIN AND MORE

"I can't see it as permanent"

MM MARCH 28 David Bowie begins to get into character(s).

HYPER HAS BEEN kindly defined by a wise friend as being 90 per cent hyperbole and 10 per cent hypocrisy. With that clearly in mind, who would ever think of giving the title to their own group?

David Bowie would and has, partly as a protest against the pretentiousness and insincerity in some quarters of the music business. Explained David last week over the almost overwhelming din of a lunchtime ale house:

"I deliberately chose the name in favour of something that sounded perhaps heavy because now no one can say they're being conned. Especially nowadays, there's a lot of narrow-mindedness among groups, or at least behind the organisers who claim to be presenting free music for free people, but I don't see how they can because they're so hypocritical in everything else. I suppose you could say I chose Hype deliberately with tongue in cheek."

David's last record was the ultra-dramatic "Space Oddity", which was a good reflection of the extent to which his imagination will stretch. In some ways the conception of the song was so simple (dealing with the disastrous shortcomings of an astronaut) that you wonder why it hadn't been done before. It is more than probable that five or six years ago "Space Oddity" would have been given an icy reception and even banned as being sick. The disc was in fact banned in the States. "I was pleased that the record was a success, but getting a hit wasn't so very important and I honestly can't see why it was so popular."

The last statement could only be put down to modesty and David is a very modest character. He has refused to allow himself the easy way out of becoming bitter towards the business. "Space Oddity" at last brought him deserved recognition after several attempts at getting a hit, but now the charts hold little attention for him.

What then does the future hold for his new release with Hype, "Pretty Star"? »



March 11, 1970: the Hype
- (l-r) David Bowie, Tony
Visconti, John Cambridge
and Mick Ronson (out
of shot) - appear at the
Atomic Sunrise Festival
at London's Roundhouse



1970

JANUARY – MARCH

"I think a lot of people are expecting another 'Space Oddity'," said David, "and 'Pretty Star' is nothing like it. I'm sure this is why the BBC aren't plugging it. Everyone wanted another song with the same feel as 'Space Oddity', but as I'd done it I didn't see the point of doing it again. The song served its purpose but I hope I'm not going to be expected to write and record a whole lot of stuff that is so obvious as 'Space Oddity'."

I remarked that it had taken some time for "Space Oddity" to start making an impression on the charts – a statement which had David nodding vigorously. "Yes," he agreed, "it took about three or four months to catch on and the release had been held back about three months before that. The only reason I can think of is that the record company were waiting to cash in on the American moon landing. It was banned in the States because they thought it was in bad taste and even might upset some people."

This is something which David stoically makes no apologies for. "All my songs are very personal and I combine this with an exaggeration so the meaning is clearly brought home to the listener. A lot of my compositions are very much fantasy tales. I like Marc Bolan's songs very much because I think he obviously feels the same way."

The conversation then swung once more to the intriguing Hype. "I'm very happy with the band," says David. "I have Tony Visconti, who has played bass on nearly all my records, John Cambridge, who used to be with Junior's Eyes, and Mick Ronson on guitar and I play 12-string guitar."

"We've had these costumes made by various girlfriends"

"Although we're all happy with the set-up, I can't see it becoming a really permanent thing. I want to retain Hype and myself as two separate working units whereby we can retain our own identities."

"The gigs we've done so far have gone better than I expected. We played the Roundhouse recently and it was great. The Roundhouse audiences seem to be something apart from the usual blasé London audiences."

"We've had these costumes made by various girlfriends which make us look like Dr Strange or the Incredible Hulk. I was a bit apprehensive about wearing them at the Roundhouse gig because I didn't know how the audience would react. If they think it's a huge put-on the whole thing will backfire, but they seemed to accept it, which was nice."

"The best audiences I know of are up north, where they really appreciate you. In London the audiences are very aware that they are living in the place where it's all supposed to be happening, so inevitably they have this cool attitude they'll try and sell you anything from a pair of trousers to your own car." *Raymond Telford*

Hype and David Bowie's future

TYPE HAS been BY RAYMOND TELFORD band," says David Tony Visconti played bass on ne

With the aid of a glamorous assistant, Black Widow frontman Kip Trevor gets down to summoning the spirit of demon-wrangling goddess Lady Astaroth



"The act includes a seduction conjuration"

MM MARCH 28 Introducing... Midlands-based dabblers in the occult Black Widow. "We had quite a few calls from witches."

MAGIC IN MUSIC. Is it a big hype or is there something in the ancient art that a number of groups are utilising both on stage and on record? Black Widow are a Leicester-based band formed last summer from the remnants of five Midlands groups. They developed their individual interest in witchcraft into a group stage act that involves sacrificial and demon-raising scenes.

Fact or fiction, is there an element of the unknown in what many think, not surprisingly, is just another pop group gimmick? Clive Box, drummer with Black Widow, gave his views: "Personally, I've been interested in witchcraft for about three years. When we started as Black Widow we were looking around for a stage act and I suggested that witchcraft would be a basis of a tremendous act, which is what we have perfected today."

"The act includes a seduction conjuration and sacrificial ceremony. Everything is authentic and we attempt to raise Lady Astaroth, who is played by a young girl. Lady Astaroth is not a demon; she's a goddess with a lot of demons under her control."

"When we started doing this we had quite a few phone calls from witches who were against what we were doing. There are two classes of witches – hereditary and gardenarian. It is the gardenarian witches who have telephoned us, because they believe that the ceremonies should not be held in public as they feel you are giving away secrets."

"Since then we have had help from Alex Saunders, the leading authority in Europe on witchcraft. He is a hereditary witch and was worried in case something did happen in our act. We get the audience involved in our act and with all those minds, there's so much

power that something could materialise, and Mr Saunders has advised us what to do if Lady Astaroth did. Apparently she could possess the girl who portrays her on stage."

"I don't really think there's anything to fear, but Mr Saunders is making us a talisman to offer us protection. We've been a bit worried recently as there have been one or two things that have been a bit unusual. There are little things like all the windows in the flat being open and we found two of the three bolts holding the steering box in the van were snapped, and yet the van is checked every month and they're so robust. Can you imagine

travelling hundreds of miles on the motorway with only one bolt holding the steering box?"

"On another occasion I was driving with my girlfriend on a road I use two or three times a week near my home and we went round a right-hand bend and the steering suddenly locked and I ended up in the ditch. I called the AA and asked them to check the steering and they could find nothing wrong. We've had a lot of threats to the office and it's a bit worrying."

Musically, the group – Zoot Taylor (organ), Clive

Box (drums), Jim Gannon (guitar), Kip Trevor (vocals), Geoff Griffiths (bass) and Clive Jones (sax and flute) – listen to a lot of people and incorporate different feels into what they play, which is basically the work of Jim Gannon.

"The seduction scene is based on the bossa nova, for instance, the conjuration scene is very heavy and the seduction is really a rock number," continued Box.

Devils, demons, evil spirits and witchcraft apart, it is on music that Black Widow have to be judged. It needs a lot of "magic" to convince the cynical public... *Royston Eldridge*



"With so much audience mind-power, something could materialise"



Paul and Linda McCartney with sheepdog Martha on their remote farm near Campbeltown on the Kintyre peninsula, early 1970

“Paul’s fine”

NME FEB 21 Where is “the hermit of St John’s Wood”?

JAMES PAUL MCCARTNEY is home and baby and Linda and ballad and rock’n’roll ravers, and Fair Isle sweaters and dad and brother and the Friday train to Lime Street. John Lennon is Yoko and peace and Plastic fantastic; X and Sex; and bang the gong for right and wrong. The new Beatles single, “Let It Be”, is released within the next fortnight, and in the light of these differences it would have been a personal pleasure to report an imminent “Come Together” between the worlds of old Fair Isle McCartney and Plastic Lennon fantastic!

Sadly, no such luck. The void between them seems as wide as ever. And a close look at the label credit for John’s own new single, “Instant Karma”, seems to be evidence that even the Lennon-McCartney songwriting partnership may now be about to be dropped. The publishing line plays it straight: “Composed: Lennon”. The new “Let It Be” single does carry a Lennon-McCartney credit, but in reality it’s one of those beautiful and exclusively McCartney songs in which he develops the soft, tight pain of a number like “Yesterday” or “Fool On The Hill”. After George’s “Something” solo, another thought is that we may be on a run of solo Beatle tracks released as singles. John next, maybe. Then a Ringo swingalong?

To my mind the saddest part of the whole state of Beatles music at the moment is that all of it is being written in isolation. Of course it’s good, and a great deal of it is brilliant. But think of the possibility and the potential of these talents if they were combined today, both in composition and sound, and the fact that they are not working together comes somewhere near to pop music tragedy.

As for Paul, who still prefers to express his mind exclusively in his music, it’s difficult to

pinpoint the moment when he lost interest in Apple, plus Lennon’s peace crusade, and began to wonder if The Beatles still existed any more. At the same time, it takes little imagination to understand the ease with which he decided to “switch off” some time last year. There were problems and arguments as a result of the Northern Songs takeover bid; further disagreements, about other business affairs; and a general air of sourness over there

at Apple’s Savile Row HQ.

Having turned off the charm, however, I now suspect that Paul would find it something of a personal discomfort to begin interviews again, even if he wanted to. It’s a bit tricky when you’ve kicked the habit. Until such time as he

chooses to jump into the limelight again, though, Paul’s firm-minded wife Linda seems to have taken over as a kind of barrier between him and the rest of the world.

Callers to their St John’s Wood house either meet Linda or a member of the staff, and Paul is “not available”, or “out”, or “busy”. Students of astrology may well recognise a typical Gemini reaction in this McCartney mystique... outward and sociable at one minute; a hermit the next; good friendly guy one minute; distant guy the next.

Personally, I can only wish him peace and quiet for as long as he wants, following those years of Beatlemania and Being Nice. I respect his ability as a musician, and providing he regularly comes up with the goods – for his own sake as much as anyone else’s – then let’s make it a case of Let It Be, Let It Be. As Ringo puts it: “Paul’s fine. Maureen and I went over to dinner with him last week and we had a good time. He’s writing songs and he’s doing things. He’s happy. He’s just fed up doing interviews, that’s all. I don’t think he’d care if he never did another interview in all his life.” Alan Smith

Paul’s wife Linda seems to have taken over as a kind of barrier

“I shall try and hustle them out”

NME JAN 10 John Lennon plans a peace festival featuring The Beatles, Stones, Dylan and Elvis.

JOHNN AND YOKO Lennon are planning a massive Peace Festival to be staged at Toronto’s Mosport Park in Canada for three days from July 3. John is hoping to secure The Beatles, the Rolling Stones, Bob Dylan and Elvis Presley for the event – and he envisages all these superstars on stage together to climax three days of music, poetry and peace propaganda.

Among those who have already agreed to take part – according to Lennon – are Led Zeppelin, Jethro Tull, The Who, Eric Clapton, King Crimson, Joe Cocker, The Band and Peter Sellers. Asked how confident he was of securing The Beatles for the event, John said, “I can’t speak for all The Beatles, but I shall try and hustle them out – maybe I’ll get one or two of the others.”

The Lennons have already had a meeting with Canadian prime minister Pierre Trudeau and health minister John Munro, both of whom approve plans for the festival. Said John, “We chose Canada in preference to any other country because it has the right political climate.” He added that he would like also to take the festival to Moscow.

Dick Gregory has accepted an invitation to be part of the Lennons’ peace council, which will administer a Peace Fund. One quarter of the gross proceeds from the festival will go to the Peace Fund. Lennon also announced a network of peace radio stations, which will broadcast his peace jingles and a regular report by the Lennons on peace – and already 35 Canadian stations have joined the movement.

John and Yoko are to purchase 70 acres of land in isolated Hanherred in Northern Denmark. They plan to live there for several months every year in contemplation.



February 11, 1970: John and Yoko backstage at Top Of The Pops

GETTY (2)

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JANUARY - MARCH



Mott The Hoople in the Jack Tar Hotel in San Francisco, August 1970: (l-r) Verden Allen, Ian Hunter, Dale "Buffin" Griffin, Pete Overend Watts, Mick Ralphs

"We'd like to do a Traffic"

MM JAN 17 Introducing... Mott The Hoople, "a shy bunch" from the Hereford area.

POP MUSIC IN Britain has, more often than not, taken its lead from America. Changing styles there have been reflected by the mirror of our own scene, although of late that tendency has been reversed by bands from The Beatles to Led Zeppelin. The most important American trend of 1969, though, has scarcely caused a ripple on the rather over-smooth waters of British pop.

I refer to that most excellent development country-rock, which has spawned groups of the calibre of The Burrito Brothers, The Dillards, The Youngbloods and Area Code 615. Perhaps it is because country-rock derives from the twin streams of country & western music that it has not been seized on in Britain.

However, recently I heard an album by a British group which seemed to me to have some of the characteristics of country-rock: a certain relaxed, open feeling which appears to derive from a rural rather than urban environment.

The band is called Mott The Hoople, and although their debut album was generally kindly received, several reviewers noted a great similarity was intended or coincidental. "Completely unintentional," they cried in unison ("they" being singer and pianist Ian Hunter, organist Verden Allen, guitarist Mick Ralphs, bassist Overend Watts and drummer Buffin).

"Seriously though, it just came out that way by accident," said Ian. "We use organ and piano, which must make the sound similar for a start, and the studios we cut the album in had a lot to do with the vocals sounding like Dylan."

As I mentioned earlier, the group have a kind of rural feeling, which could possibly be attributed to the fact that they all come from the green and pleasant hills of Hereford, except Ian who comes from Shrewsbury. The four from Hereford spent many moons playing in rival groups around the town.

A few months ago they decided to try and break into what is fondly known as the "big time", and after due consideration they plumped for Island as the place to go.

Mick came down to London six months ago with some rather average demo tapes and played them for Guy Stevens, who was interested in the songs but not really in the band. They had no singer at the time, so Ian joined - "it was a fluke" - and, as he had been writing songs and making demos in London, he began to write songs for the band with Mick. However, Stevens was interested enough to hire a studio for the group, and he went away raving. The next day they all trooped into another studio to see how they'd sound on record, and cut some rough tapes which further excited Stevens.

Plans were made for their first album, and after two weeks' rehearsal they cut their tracks. At this time they had still to perform in public, but the sound on the LP gives the impression that they are a live rather than a studio group.

"Now that we've played some live gigs" including the Country Club, the Lyceum, the

Speakeasy and Aylesbury's Friars club - "we're a different band," says Mick.

"Mind you, we were never really influenced by anyone - there weren't many bands to go and hear in Hereford, and in fact there wasn't much to do except play our own music."

They're a shy bunch, amazingly pleasant to be around after a surfeit of hard, blasé Londoners, and they tend to come off the stand exclaiming how they've enjoyed each other's playing. It will be interesting to see how they fare in the rugged climes of America, where they tour in May. The album is set for release in the States in February or March on the Atlantic label, who have, says Mick, "given us a really fantastic advance".

"We'd really like to do a Traffic and live in a country cottage, but circumstances dictate living in London," says Mick.

Ian: "It would be really great to get into a position where we could go back and live at home, while still being part of the scene. That may even happen one day, the way the scene is going."

As I got up to leave, Mick said, "Would you please put in that we'd like to thank

Guy Stevens, who's our aide, mentor and sixth man, and also Andy Johns, our engineer. We must be the luckiest band in the world for recording. Everybody's so great - it's not a drag like some sessions."

I think Mott The Hoople are too good for London. Not musically, but as people they're just too bloody nice. I just hope that the concrete jungle doesn't change their admirably placed heads much. *Richard Williams*

"Atlantic have given us a really fantastic advance"

Happy Hoople

"Jagger opened my eyes a lot"

NME MARCH 21 Arthur Lee returns to lead a new, "tighter" Love.

ALMOST CERTAINLY SEVERAL years too late to cash in on the fantastic build-up and superlatives that were being heaped on the West Coast rock group back in 1966 and '67, Love has been and gone. But when the boss is Arthur Lee, singer and guitarist, and only once previously has he been known to take Love outside a three-mile radius of Los Angeles, I guess we're pretty lucky to have had them here at all.

Arthur Lee, 26, from Memphis, is a very strange guy, inviting rumour and myth in abundance. He is said to be the only black singer ever to have watched Mick Jagger in action to learn something. He sacks his band with alarming regularity, so much so that he is the only remaining member of the group which recorded their first LP, *Love*.

Hailed as it was, even Lee was hard put to call the album an object lesson in originality: "Jagger opened my eyes a lot," he freely admits. "The first time I ever saw the Rolling Stones was on *The Red Skelton Show* in America. It was that 'I'm not going to let this lot screw me up' attitude that came on so strong, I realised that you could always... you should always do your own thing.

"At that time, even The Beatles were wearing suits, and they all looked alike, but not Jagger. He's only singing rhythm and blues, but he's doing it in his own way. It's his interpretation, and that's what I'm trying to do. The song may be the same, but the singing is different. It's like the candle and the light bulb. You get the same outcome, but one's got electricity."

If Jagger influenced Lee stage-wise, it was The Byrds who gave him a musical direction. "Before I saw The Byrds at a place called Ciro's, they really ripped me out. Their music wasn't rhythm and blues like everybody else was playing, it really got to the heart. They were singing their own material, and it was like the songs I was writing myself. So again, I figured that I could do my own thing and get accepted. That's what went into *Love*, the first album. Me doing my own thing for the first time."

Previously, Lee, who rebelled against the accordion at grammar school, had taken up the organ in a bid to be another Booker T. He went through groups with such unlikely names as Arthur Lee & The LAGs, The VIPs and The American Four. It was in

the latter group that yet another name had a profound influence on Arthur. "I had written a tune for this little chick, and I wanted some real funky guitar on it, like Curtis Mayfield got on 'People Get Ready'. Anyway, I heard there was this cat playing with Little Richard, and he really knocked me out. Yeah, Jimi Hendrix. He was the first black guy I had ever seen with long hair... really freaked out. Right there and then, I went out and got myself a long wig. That was some trip.

"Hendrix sure impressed me, playing guitar with his left hand. He was wearing a suit and tie, but that hair, man, wow. I just had to get a wig."

He was hardly Mr Originality in those days, but Arthur gradually pulled himself round and soon Love were playing and recording only their own material. For a while they were known as The Grass Roots, but he forgot to register the name, and when another group showed up using the same tag, Arthur renamed his group Love, and from then until now, the name and the leader is just about all that hasn't changed.

"What could I do if my manager rang me up and said, 'Hey, your group just walked out on you?' People get uptight for different reasons, but usually because they weren't making any bread. Anyway, that was just after the latest album, *Out Here*, and I figured that particular trip had gone as far as it could have done, and I wasn't happy.

"I've been altering the group looking for the sound I wanted, and sometimes they've let me. Now I've got Frank Fayad on bass, George Suranovich on drums and recently Gary Rowles on lead. I don't know about adding more members at the moment, but if the music needs a change of lineup, I'll do it at any time. I'm aware now, perhaps for the first time, of the direction, and I look back on the early times and see that most of it was necessary for us to be where we are now."

With so many American bands doing so well in Britain just as the Jethros and Macs and Zeppelin are massive Stateside – Arthur wonders why Love haven't achieved too much as yet. One answer is that British music fans like to see as well as hear. "It was mainly my fault," he explained, "that we haven't travelled until now. I was always afraid of doing the wrong thing, and blowing the whole scene. We were too loose, far too loose, but things are tighter now."

Then, of course, there is the question of cancelled tours and only intermittent record releases: "That's tied up together. We recorded the albums at regular intervals, and normally they would have been issued at regular intervals, but twice albums were held up to coincide with tours which never happened."

Or there's the old cliché about the music being too far ahead of its time, too heavy for the mass market, and I guess Love is one of the very few groups of whom this could well be true.

"All I want is a good time," said Arthur in conclusion. "It's all gotten a bit intellectual, and a lot of people who should see don't see that all we are doing is our own thing, just being free. What I hope is that they might see me having a good time, and they decide to have a good time too. That's all." *Gordon Coxhill*



"It was mainly my fault that we haven't travelled until now"



“It’s not easy to do this”

But when she arrives in London, JONI MITCHELL wows everyone she meets. Easy definition (as folk singer, celebrity girlfriend) is something she seeks to elude. Her songs and performance do just that with ease. “I want my music to get more involved and sophisticated,” she says.

— MELODY MAKER JANUARY 10 —

CANADIAN FOLK SINGER Joni Mitchell this week denied rumours that she would be retiring after her Royal Festival Hall concert on January 17. But Joni, who can scarcely be described as a folk singer any more and has no current connections with Canada either, will be a good deal more withdrawn in the future.

She flew to London from Los Angeles last week, and at a Warner Reprise reception she told *MM*, “It’s true I’ve postponed all bookings indefinitely, but that’s just to catch my breath. I really need to get some new material together, and I also want to learn to play more instruments, and find time to do some painting.”

So Joni, far from taking things easy, is going to have her time cut out in the next few months. She made it quite apparent that she is going through a transitional stage in her career, expressing herself through a wider range of media, but at the same time delving deeper into her own distinctive musical bag.

“I’ve got a hard core of fans who follow me around from one concert to another, and it’s for them I feel I ought to produce some new songs. I come from Saskatoon, Canada originally, and I’ll probably move back there, but at this point in my life I would rather live in Los Angeles as it’s right in the middle of change, and therefore far more stimulating. There are a lot of artists in LA at the moment, and the exchange between artists is tremendous.”

Joni took a trip back to her previous two visits to England. The first she remembers specifically as her first taste of English folk clubs, and the second for her appearance at the Festival Of Contemporary Song in September 1968, with Al Stewart, Jackson C Frank and The Johnstons. It was this concert that really established her as a major artist in Britain, and she is still more than enthusiastic about that concert. “I’d sure like to meet The Johnstons again while I’m here,” she added.

But songs like “Chelsea Morning”, “Marcie” and “Both Sides Now”, which acted as her springboard, have now made way for slightly more »

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August 29, 1970: Joni Mitchell at the Isle Of Wight Festival

1970

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"I've had to work my way up": Joni Mitchell in 1970

complex numbers, perhaps brought about by the change of environment.

"I want my music to get more involved and more sophisticated. Right now I'm learning how to play a lot of new instruments. In the last month I've managed to write three new songs, including a couple of Christmas songs. I've also written a song for a film score that hasn't been used, and 'Woodstock', which is the next

Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young single."

Joni emphasised that she will not be playing any folk clubs while in Britain. She will make only one concert appearance, and will be tele-recording a guest spot on the Tom Jones show. "I shall then take a couple of weeks' holiday in Britain before returning. I want to get out into the country, and in particular to Scotland."

Country and city life both play prominent but entirely different roles in Joni Mitchell's life. And it is the latter that is currently influencing her writing. "I've a feeling that America may suddenly get very strange. In Los Angeles the air is very bad, and it's not good to breathe city air all the time. But it's not just this environment that influences me. Any kind of music that moves me in any way has some effect on my writing."

Joni is more than enthusiastic about her next album, which is almost completed. A couple of tunes she picked out for special attention: "They Paved Paradise And Put Up A Parking Lot" and "He Played Real Good For Free", the latter being about a sidewalk musician.

— MELODY MAKER SEPTEMBER 19 —

SCENE IN A television studio: girl in a long pink shift, which catches at her ankles when she walks, picks hesitantly at a few bars on the piano, reluctantly gives up, and asks for a glass of something hot, maybe tea.

Her manager, looking like a thinner, less ebullient version of Dave

Crosby, brings her a drink, and she tells the audience sitting out there in the darkness of the television theatre that she must have picked up a cold in London, she always gets colds when she is in England; does everybody get colds when they go to America? Gives a nervous little giggle.

She resumes the song, unfolds it carefully like a love letter written on finest paper, pouring out its lines with a peculiar little sob in her voice, as if she cannot bear to let the words slip away. And they are deep, genuine words, about the lover who "when he is gone, the bed's too big and the pan's too wide", which says it all so simply yet so fully.

"There is
a certain
amount of
my life in all
my songs"



The walls were shaking

MM JAN 24 Joni is captivating at the modernist concert hall beside the Thames.

JONI MITCHELL MUST love England to the same extent that England loves Joni Mitchell. This fact was implicit throughout the whole of her two-hour concert at the Festival Hall on Saturday. The walls were still shaking 10 minutes after Joni had taken her second encore. Such was the greed and expectation,

that hardly a person had left the hall when she finally returned for a farewell acknowledgement, and the audience rose en masse.

With great warmth and presence, the Canadian songstress appeared for the first set in a long red dress, her voice soaring and plummeting over that aggressive and characteristically open-tuned guitar. After three numbers Joni moved to the piano and captured the audience completely by the nature of "He Played Real Good For Free", a recent composition, which reflects her environmental change. She closed a well-balanced first half repertoire with the famous "Both Sides Now".

"Her voice soaring and plummeting over that open-tuned guitar"

Next Joni appeared in blue and embarked on a much longer set which included "Galleries", "Marcie" and "Michael From Mountains", and with each song she drew the audience further into her. An outstanding Richard Farina-style rock number, "They Paved Paradise And Put Up A Parking Lot", and the next Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young single, "Woodstock", prefaced the finale, which was an event in itself - Dino Valente's great song about brotherhood. *Jeremy Gilbert*

Still in the same low key, she moves into the lyrics of "Woodstock" and the line about the "bombers in the sky turning into butterflies above the nation", which is tremendous imagery, and then "Willy": "He is my child, he is my father I would be his lady all my life".

No other contemporary songwriter could compose lyrics the equal of these in tenderness and innocence,

a sweet combination. She plucks at a couple of tunes on a dulcimer, which she has only been playing since February, and then picks up her guitar to sing "Big Yellow Taxi", which gets great applause, of course, as does "Clouds". She falters a bit on it, and cannot quite reach the pitch at times, but it is the final number and she has made it through alright.

Short pause while she stands timidly in the centre of the stage, looking vulnerable and dreamy, then fade-out.

Cut to the dressing room, and a typical dressing room scene, with a few friends, one or two press, a lot of record company representatives, and the usual well-known visitor. In appearance, she seems rather severe in an attractive sort of way with her fine blonde hair scraped back from her tanned face, which has large bones around the cheeks and forehead, and a wide, generous mouth. It's a pleasant, open face that sits on top of a body whose seeming fragility inspires a feeling of instinctive protectiveness.

Joni Mitchell is not her real name. At Fort McCloud in Alberta, Canada, she is known as Roberta Joan Anderson, but in 1965 she got married to one Chuck Mitchell, a marriage dissolved about 12 months later. Her first album, *Song To A Seagull*, reflects the sadness of this marital split, and indeed, the motions that have inspired many of her songs are always tangible, beating like veins near the surface of her work.

"Willy", for instance, refers to her association with Graham Nash, now ended, while the impetus for writing "For Free" came from a clarinetist she saw playing on a London street - "Nobody stopped to hear him, though he played so sweet and high", one line goes wistfully.

"There is a certain amount of my life in all my songs," she told me softly. "They are honest and personal, and based on truth, but I exercise a writer's licence to change details. Honesty is important to me. If I have any personal philosophy it is that I like the truth. I like to be straight with people and them with me. But it is not easy to do this all the time, especially in this business where there is so much falsity."

Her first album was not released until late 1968, but she had been singing for five years then in clubs and bars, while her name was attracting public attention through other artists' interpretations of her songs: Judy Collins' version of "Both Sides Now" is probably the best example.

More recently, too, Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young cut their interpretation of her lovely, floating song "Woodstock", whipping it up in the process into something fierce and pounding, far removed from the original in tone and execution.

"I liked their performance too, in its way," she said. "They were seeing Woodstock from the point of view of the performers, while my version is concerned with the spirit of the festival. I never did actually get to Woodstock itself, you see, because the traffic jams to the site were nine miles long, so I sat in my New York hotel room and saw it on television."

If anyone has helped her, though, in popularising her work it has been the cowboy rock'n'roll singer Tom Rush, who she said had got her to leave Michigan, where she was doing the round of folk clubs, and securing her a gig at the Gaslight in New York. This was not a total success, but Rush put out a version of her "Urge For Going" after it had been turned down by Judy Collins, and this became a favourite on the club circuits, opening doors for her in consequence.

"Yes, he was the first to help. Until he played that and 'Circle Game' nobody really wanted to know; they would time me when I went on as an opening act, so you can see that I have had to work my way up. It has all been very gradual. Tom helped me as well in that period, because I was unsure about my writing and didn't think it was very good. But there have been a lot of people who have been good to me." *Michael Watts* •



A triumph for Joni

that Joni should have been Crucible. On the stage, Ric Colbeck, altoist, Michael bassist, John (French), Wyn Liss, living pro-nationalist. The set for a concert contained and some torrents lines were early the useful la. The first play sound to steel of sations but con which is charged in a du beginning Osborn body in i hear h were s harmon carried formed stance, there'll dripping alto. Jenny Twining bass he sive s illigree registe source others.

1970

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“It’s very elastic”

That’s life in the **SOFT MACHINE, on a tightrope between songs and improvisation. The engaging, freeform Robert Wyatt and circumspect, classically trained Mike Ratledge discuss recent engagements at Ronnie Scott’s and the Proms.**

— **MELODY MAKER** FEBRUARY 14 —

ROBERT WYATT IS the member of the Soft Machine you’re most likely to be watching while you listen to their music. Tousle-haired and athletic behind his drum kit, he has the kind of natural showmanship which does not compromise the quality of the music he’s a part of.

Reviewing their recent Fairfield Hall concert, I commented that it seemed paradoxical that, while the group are progressing rapidly, the audience is still managing to catch up with them.

“Perhaps there’s an element of flattery involved,” says Robert, “in that we expect them to follow anything we feel we want to do. But we can never really gauge for ourselves what the audience is feeling, because we don’t stop for applause.

“Now that even the break in the middle has gone, we’ll play for a minimum of one-and-a-half hours and come straight off. So we only feel any sort of reaction when we’re changing afterwards. Our sort of progression is the kind in which the musicians improve as they play, gaining more control over their instruments and pacing themselves better. This is something that everyone has to learn, and that’s what’s happening to us.

“I never know what people think of us. It’s quite satisfying. We can come off stage and Mike’ll be quite depressed, while I’m turning cart wheels. We’re not an intellectual group—if we were, we wouldn’t get anywhere. We don’t even talk about it any more, and it just happens in a subconscious sort of way. Because Mike is musically highly educated doesn’t mean we aren’t intuitive.

“We don’t spend enough time in rehearsals for Mike, and we spend too much time there for me, because I can only discover things in the act of playing the piece, in a performing situation. It’s like painting in a way. Some painters do sketches first, but often the whole thing is the work itself. I use time like a painter, putting layers on; the first set starts out casually, and then I build it up as I get into it. It’s really very elastic.

“The basic thing is to find the right people to work with, and after that you commit yourself to working round whatever they’re doing. If I thought there was anybody playing something really fantastic, I’d want to work with them—and for me that’s Mike, Hugh, Elton and Lyn.

“Hugh’s bass playing is the most interesting new thing for me. He’s doing things to the bass that I’ve always wanted people to do at this level. When he solos he might play high and fast, but he always keeps the kind of weight and authority that the bass should have. When he races up to the top he doesn’t leave a gap at the bottom.”

About audiences, Robert comments: “I’ve always found British audiences to be the least idealistic of all. The French and the Dutch kids really want something else to »

Soft Machine outside the Albert Hall before their Proms appearance there, August 12, 1970: (l-r) Mike Ratledge, Hugh Hopper, Robert Wyatt and Elton Dean

GETTY

listen to, and they don't want to feel they're being hyped. The whole atmosphere in Britain, when you're dashing up and down the M1, is different. For instance, if the PA goes wrong, there's less urgency to get it fixed. Maybe this is because Britain is home, and we don't feel the sense of occasion that we get abroad. That's probably our own fault, because some groups are very conscientious about every gig.

"The university audiences and the militant Left have little to do with what I've got to say. In West Berlin... people ask us why our songs aren't more politically committed, and why we charge entrance fees, and 'Whose side are you on anyway?' The best audiences are primarily interested in the music."

Robert's singing is an interesting feature of the group, and about this side of his performance he says, "I'm completely a child of the pop scene. When it comes to drawing inspiration for one of Mike's time signatures, I go and listen to Sly or James Brown. That's more poppy than most pop people listen to. The voice came from a need for a particular sound. I can't pitch accurately low because of the nature of the instruments, so I sing high. It's also better to keep totally blank and let the clear note come through.

"It's also a slightly social thing, in that it's the closest I can get to talking to the audience. I haven't got Lyn's thing about the voice being the source of all sound, and it took a long time to figure out how to use it. Singing songs was obviously out with this band, and Syd [Barrett] has been a big influence. It's an unaffected thing, just straight words really.

"But what I was saying about the pop thing: if there has been any grafting on to our music, pop music was the last thing to be grafted on. Nevertheless in ways we're completely opposed to what happens in jazz, where people extend themselves all the time. We all feel the pressure to the drums. It clears the overall conscious of the editing aspect of performance."

Among the changes which Robert is making in his playing is the use of snare drum with the snares off, making the drum into a third tom-tom pitched higher than the others.

"I've been doing that and playing nearer the rim of the drum, to get a ringing sound. This changes the whole nature of the kit, and removes the cymbals from their usual relationship to the drums. It clears the overall sound and makes a more space, because the sound with cymbals and snare going with the other instruments can be very muddy."

Robert's technique fascinated me the first time I saw him. He plays not so much like a conventional kit drummer, but more like a timpanist, with that fluid movement around the drums which comes from the arms rather than the wrists.

"I learned from a jazz drummer, who taught me to play with my elbows in, using my wrists like Philly Joe Jones. But I never really mastered it, and anyway you can't get the volume or intensity that way, so I rather let it go and started using my forearms more.

"I'm seriously considering taking the snare drum away from the centre of the kit and putting it more to one side, so that I can get away from the Buddy Rich thing and use it more for accents.

"The kit I use was given to me by Mitch [Mitchell], who had it custom-built in the States out of maplewood. When I sit down behind it, it's like being in a little room, it's very comfortable. If jazz drumming has had any influence on me, it's been teaching me what not to do – although I hope that doesn't sound arrogant. Some drummers have all this jazz training and just do it all wrong. For me, it's really all down to James Brown's rhythm section." *Richard Williams*

— MELODY MAKER JUNE 6 —

THE SOFT MACHINE are probably the only non-jazz group in Britain who could command a week in the hallowed precincts of Ronnie Scott's Frith Street emporium in London. In great measure that's a tribute to the way they've synthesised elements from many diverse musical sources, grafting them onto their own well-defined personalities to form an

organic and readily identifiable style. Mike Ratledge is their organist, a rather saturnine man who wears 1965 McGuinn shades and hovers over his twin keyboards, producing sounds which have the suddenness and intensity of lightning. The week at Scott's was obviously an unusual and instructive experience for them. After all, how many of their contemporaries get the chance to sit down and play in one place for six nights, with all the opportunity for detailed exploration that it implies?

"It was useful mainly for that reason," says Mike. "The way it stretched our repertoire was very challenging, and we had to push ourselves, into areas of freedom where we wouldn't normally need to go. We had to improvise more than we usually do, because we didn't have enough material. In that sense it certainly taught us something."

In terms of audience reaction, the week was not a success. Ronnie's regular patrons were unsympathetic, and few of the Softs' fans could afford the necessarily high prices. "I think we left the audiences pretty much as we found them, except for those who came specifically to hear us, and they were spread out over the week. I can't see that it had much value as far as exposure to a different audience goes."

The group have now played three London concerts – two at the Fairfield Halls and one at the Queen Elizabeth Hall within a comparatively short space of time. Mike says that this was purely coincidence, and comments, "My ideal is to play a set of repertoire twice, in the same place, and then come back later with new material. That's why we're resting at the moment: it's in order to write some new stuff, and I think we'll be playing in London again soon."

Mike and bassist Hugh Hopper write roughly an equal amount of the repertoire. Drummer Robert Wyatt composed early in the band's life, and wrote several of the tracks on their second Probe album (*Volume Two*), but now it's fairly divided between Mike and Hugh. Ratledge doesn't find it easy to talk about the difference in their writing.

"Our different backgrounds don't come over. There's as much difference between two of my pieces as there is between one of mine and one of Hugh's. Hugh tends to write a theme, have a blowing section in the middle, and then return to the theme at the end... but then I've written things like that too.

"I tend to write things with a given concept. I'm very lazy and don't have much confidence, so I need something – like a progression or a time signature – to get to compose. These conceptual elements are really

something I use to con myself into believing in what I'm writing. I'm very interested in unusual time signatures, but at the moment I'm writing a piece in 6/4, which isn't exactly far out. But in terms of a general direction my music is heading for more complex structures.

"Our sets are an amalgamation of different tunes by different people, and when you string them together into a 45-minute entity there's bound to be a somewhat ad hoc quality about the arrangement. You try to make the transitions as organic as possible, but it's not the total piece of music that I'd like it to be at the moment. The sudden switches that people criticise aren't inside each piece, they come when we go from one piece into another."

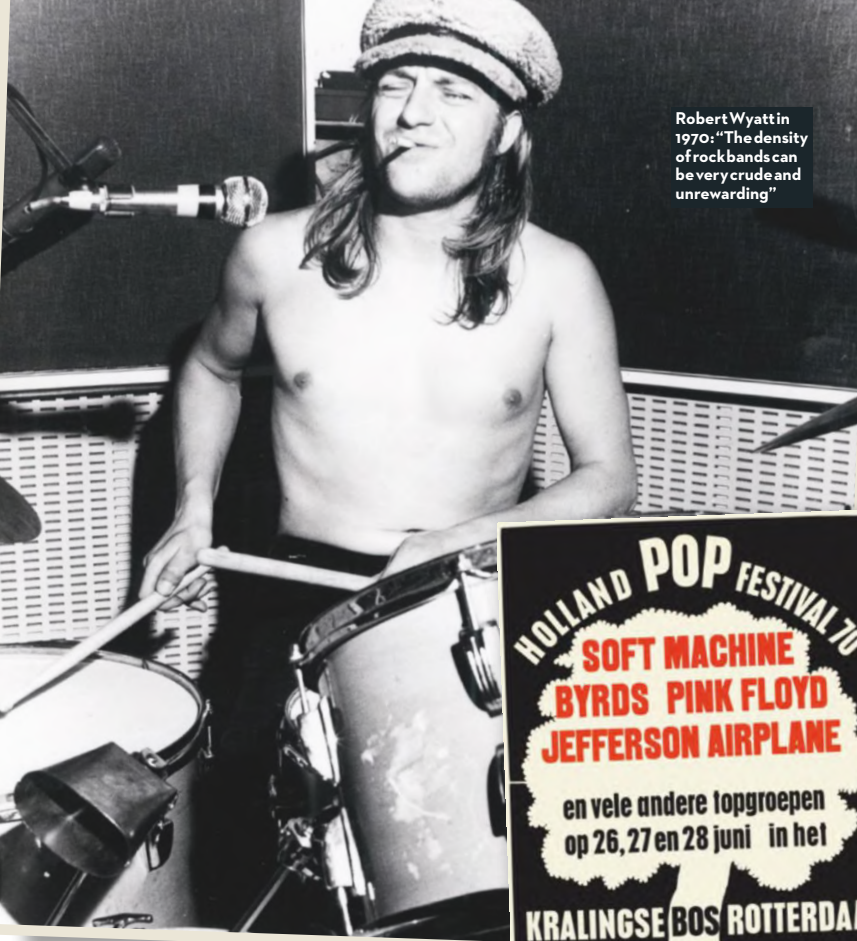
Unorthodox time signatures are becoming more commonplace, partly because young musicians are growing up around them and thus can "feel" them much more easily than their elders, to whom playing 7/4 was like going to the moon.

"I've been aware of them since I started writing," says Mike, "and I guess it was with Messaien [the 20th-century classical composer] that I first came up against them, although of course they've been used throughout musical history in so-called primitive music as well as so-called classical music. But Messaien was the first person I'd come across who'd obviously spent a lot of time getting into it."

Mike uses a Lowrey organ, in contrast to the almost ubiquitous use of the Hammond, but it wasn't originally a voluntary decision. "I bought it when we hadn't got the money for a Hammond, and I got to know what I could do with it. It's worked out well because the majority of organists use Hammonds, so the Lowrey's characteristics stand out a bit. I suppose that a large number of my stylistic idiosyncrasies are due to the inherent peculiarities of the Lowrey."

For the future, the Softs plan to remain as a quartet, with altoist Elton Dean, but may add other musicians for selected performances. One





Robert Wyatt in 1970: "The density of rock bands can be very crude and unrewarding"

innovation will certainly be the use of pre-recorded tapes.

"The tapes will mean difficulties like keeping the pitch content throughout the electronic fluctuations, but they won't be tied down to anything very specific and the musicians will be fairly free on top of it. It won't be like laying down specific drum or piano tracks—it'll be loops and things like that."

The group's new album, *Third*, will be out soon after you read this, and Mike is very pleased with the speed and care with which CBS have handled it.

"My feelings about the music on it change constantly. I liked it while we were making it, of course, but listening to it now I'm aware of the mistakes, while assuming a disproportionate importance. None of us can be objective about it now, but I think that each of our albums has been better than the last, although none is as good as it should have been." *Richard Williams*

— MELODY MAKER SEPTEMBER 5 —

IT'S NOT LONG since Robert Wyatt announced that he was vacating the drum stool with Soft Machine in order to pursue a career with Kevin Ayers' band and various other friends.

"I should know better by now," said Robert last week, shaking his head half in sorrow and half in happiness. "I say these things and I really mean them at the time, but a week later I'm feeling something else entirely. In all fairness to the Softs, they're still auditioning drummers, which is something I suggested because I thought they might find something better than me, someone who can read music for one thing. Not reading is my thing... primitive music, y'know."

"But I really intended to leave the band, and I suppose I had to get outside to find or what I really wanted. We had a few fights inside the band, but it's all back together now, and I don't want anything to break that very fine balance we've regained."

The Softs' recent Henry Wood Promenade Concert at the Albert Hall created controversy among the critics, who seemed to be expecting something the group were never prepared to give. Robert looks back on it with very mixed feelings.

"The whole business of surfacing for a couple of hours in that environment was to be heard by people who normally wouldn't listen to us in our normal context—and it was unnatural."

"I enjoyed parts of it, and the audience was certainly the biggest we've ever had in Britain. It was a very nice evening, socially speaking, and it was good that the audience seemed to enjoy the Terry Riley and Tim Souster pieces just as much as our stuff."

"We played alright, I suppose, and Elton particularly rose above the circumstances to play some excellent solos. In terms of the occasion, I'd say that all music grows up in a certain environment, and ours is loads of people lying around getting stoned, and we spend the first half-hour sorting out the sound balance so that the evening gradually opens out."

"At the Albert Hall, of course, that wasn't possible. There was also the whole thing of playing to a deadline. It was frustrating having to finish at exactly four minutes before 12 o'clock, because if you run over that the engineers will pull out the plugs."

How did Robert view the motives of the BBC people who put the Softs on the Proms? "I don't honestly think the BBC had too much say in it. It was down to Tim Souster, who managed to get into the sort of position of respect where he was allowed to present his own evening, and as he was interested in our music he asked us to be part of it. I don't suppose the powers-that-be at the BBC knew what they were getting at all."

"Oh dear, I really don't want to sound sour and bitter about it at all. What I'm saying is that we've done a lot of gigs and the Proms doesn't stand out as one of the important ones."

"But I can also see that it seems to have been important in terms of public reaction... For a start, the little old ladies round our way used to think that we were a load of nasty, dirty hairies, but now they all say 'Good morning, Robert' very nicely."

"In the end, though, I can't honestly say that I feel it's important. Bridge-building isn't something that you can do consciously, it happens by accident, but it's nice that people can listen to and like something that they wouldn't normally come across. Anyway I don't consider that we're a bridge-building band. We're very narrow really, pursuing one train of thought. Elton's writing should make it a little different—but

then, oh well, everything seems to go through the sausage mill and come out sounding like the Soft Machine."

Now that Robert is safely back inside the group, does he still harbour desires to get into other areas? "Well, one thing I'm doing right now is playing with my own quartet, which has Elton, Mark Charig on cornet, and Neville Whitehead on string bass."

"We've already recorded a long, free version of Gil Evans' Las Vegas Tango' for my own album on CBS, and it's really a totally free thing. Maybe we'll get into doing our own versions of Soft Machine numbers—that would be nice, getting another angle on them with a flowing string bassline instead of the fuzz bass guitar. With this band I'm trying to get some space back into my music. Arrangements, freedom, and all those different procedures can make satisfying music, which is very hard to define, but the actual effect is a certain kind of density."

"I admire the sense of space you get from *Miles Smiles* or the Miroslav Vitous album; the density of rock bands can be very crude and unrewarding. So many things are happening in the quartet; I'm constantly playing things that I've always wanted to play but never been able to, and that's a result of the more fluid situation."

The experiment of working with Ayers and the Whole World was not a success, although Robert still has great admiration for the band.

"I did two or three things with them in England, including the Hyde Park 'free' concert and a week in Holland. I tried it, but I have this tendency to change my mind completely about everything. I still think it's one of the most amazing bands in the world... Oh dear, I'm unhappy about this interview—I'm saying all the things I mean."

"Kevin's band does tend to be a little ramshackle in its approach, and perhaps I've been spoilt by being part of a comparatively slick organisation for quite a long time. I really dig David Bedford, though."

Robert's own album, which is nearing the mixing stage, is "hours of completely free things in various combinations, with all the unfashionable sound tricks that Zappa discarded five years ago and which I'm toying with right now. Hugh wants to get the Soft Machine into the studios to record very soon, and one of the best aspects of the band at the moment is the way Elton's got so involved in the music."

"He's even getting us to do things that we stopped trying to do to each other years ago, like getting me to read parts. The others completely accept that I'll never do it, but Elton keeps plugging away. It's really nice to see Mike and Hugh struggling with someone else's compositions for a change, instead of grinning evilly while I try and struggle through theirs." *Richard Williams* •

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JANUARY–MARCH

“We build it, and polish it like a jewel”

Films. Music. “The movement”. CROSBY, STILLS, NASH & YOUNG talk (and talk) a good game, but ambition is at the heart of their group. What they achieve together is one thing; what they achieve on their own is important also. Says Neil Young of his solo music: “It boosts my ego to the required dimension.”





CSNY's three-night stand at the Fillmore East, New York City in June 1970: (l-r) Graham Nash, David Crosby, Neil Young and Stephen Stills

GETTY

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— NME JANUARY 10 —

HAD I INTERVIEWED any of The Hollies this year, Graham Nash wanted to know? “Yes, Tony Hicks.” “How did you get on?” “Quite well, I thought: I liked him.” “You should, they’re nice people.” He said he’d been to see Tony the day before. “It was a bit strange at first, like walking on thin ice, but once we realised we were the same two Northern lads who came down from Stockport everything was OK.”

A year since it was not so much formed as drifted together above a Chinese laundry in London’s Moscow Road, the Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young group – now swollen to six with bassist Greg Reeves and drummer Dallas Taylor – is back in the town of its birth. Tuesday saw their first, and only, British concert before a sell-out audience at the Albert Hall. They’d logged up three days in London when I saw them on Friday and were encamped in five flats above a shop near South Kensington tube.

Lengthy and often enjoyable

MM JAN 17 CSNY rock, perhaps too gently.

CROSBY, STILLS, NASH, Young and Old gave a lengthy and often enjoyable concert at London’s Royal Albert Hall last week. “The Old” was the age-old problem of untutored musicians having to devote much time to tuning their instruments on stage.

But while Neil Young emerged as an exceptional talent with superb compositions and the only voice of distinction, and Dallas Taylor rocked up a storm on drums, the two-hour show often verged dangerously into the realms of tedium.

Dave Crosby brightened the intermissions between numbers with dry and droll remarks, but the silence which often prevailed was so intense I could distinctly hear a man scratch the stubble on his chin and at one point I dozed off, having spent a hectic night before digging Roland Kirk, now in a season at Ronnie Scott’s Club.

The first half was devoted to gentle acoustic music, which was agreeable enough, and each member had a chance to take a solo spot or work with the partner of his choice. Opening with “Suite: Judy

Blue Eyes”, they moved on to “Triad” by Dave Crosby and “Our House” by our old mate Graham Nash on piano.

Steve Stills’ piano solo received an ovation, although he had difficulty keeping time and seemed restricted to approximately three chords. After this bring-down, the electrification of the rhythm section was a welcome relief, and Dallas Taylor leaping about on drums brightened proceedings considerably. Undoubtedly, Neil Young’s haunted lonesome voice, with just the right amount of vibrato on the “The Loner” and “Down By The River”, was the high spot.

While CSN & Y did not deserve the critical pasting they received in some quarters, they could improve themselves by being a little less self-indulgent, and knowing when to stop. *Chris Welch*



I’d recognised Dave Crosby in the street outside – could it be anyone but him behind that so perfectly trimmed moustache that looks like a prop from a joke Western? – and he led me up to a living room all a-buzz with activity. Steve Stills, the fair-haired ex-Buffalo Springfield, whose birthday was the following day, Saturday, sat on the floor proclaiming: “England is the most advanced, cultured country in the world – yet it’s so far behind it’s frightening.”

Said Graham Nash, taking a place on the settee, “Every level of my life at the moment is very good and satisfying. The musical level, the financial level – which is important to allow me to pursue the music – and the private level too.”

The dapper Mr Crosby expressed a desire for the lady journalist present rather than me, and Graham and I left the seated, talking group for the quieter end of the room. I hadn’t met Graham before, but I was struck by the difference between the one I remembered from television images and photographs during Hollies days. He was much slighter than I expected; his face more gaunt and his hair lighter, possibly due to the sun of his new Californian home. “Do I miss England? Yes, a great deal. There is a beautiful atmosphere in England; I have got a bit paranoid about the police in Los Angeles. Here they are wonderful; I was upset about the two that got shot in Glasgow.”

Living in America, he says, has made him more aware of the social ills of the world. “The States seems to be a focal point for what is going down. The situation is right out on the streets there. I used to be really naive about that sort of thing. I wasn’t used to watching every passing police car wondering if they were going to stop me; or having the threat of police pulling you out of your bed. All that shocked me; it straightened me out.”

But although it’s shaken his head, America has failed to penetrate Nash’s Northern accent nor, according to Dallas Taylor when he came over to join us, his English sense of humour. “He has certainly brought some humour into the band,” offered Dallas. “The lighter parts of the album are all his. There is not much humour going down in the States among Americans these days.”

The humour strain aside, Graham also fills a role as the group’s diplomat – valuable carry-over from his days as a Hollie. Says Dave Crosby, “Graham is probably the coolest of all of us and he’s dapper and debonair and extremely intelligent... and he fights for us very well. He is able to deal with any level up to and including royalty – which he has done.”

“My musical training,” says Graham “is from a different heritage from the others. The effect is to give the group a much wider scope in which to work. When we did the album the others had never worked with an Englishman before. I record in a different way to them, but they were willing to listen and watch and I was willing to do the same for them. There is a great openness within the group.”

Greg Reeves and Neil Young, a tall, talented Canadian with straight black hair and features that suggest Red Indian blood, are recent additions to the group since the first album. “Why? Because we had a lot of electric music we wanted to play on stage. So we found two more brothers,” said Graham.

Further talk on those lines was curtailed by Dave Crosby’s attention-snatching imitation of a US cop, illustrating a point he was making. “Dave’s really rapping hard today,” said Graham to Neil, as their partner slipped into the guise of an old lady launching a tirade against long hair. “Dave’s got this thing about The Beatles at the moment,” Graham continued. “He really wants to see The Beatles performing live again, so at every opportunity he really lays into them and says what a lousy group they are, hoping it will pressure them into playing again.” He got up to take a phone call, calling back enthusiastically, “Hey, we might be doing a gig in Manchester. Wouldn’t that be great?”

I’d had the impression that CSN and Y had been working pretty solidly in the States since their formation, but I was assured this wasn’t so and in fact they’d done only 15 or so gigs in all.

“It isn’t necessary,” explained Graham on his return, “because it is impossible for everybody to see us – that’s why we make albums.”



Graham Nash meets Joni Mitchell at London Airport, December 1969

caught in the act

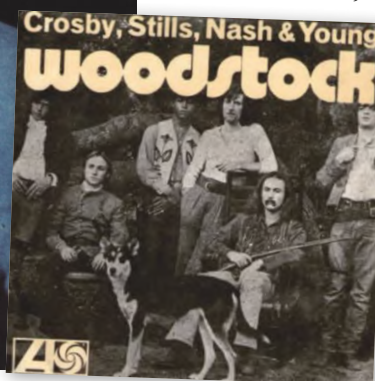
Introduced the group...
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Fortunately this was...
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and Confused" from

CSN & Y

CROSBY, Stills, Nash, Young and Old gave a lengthy and often enjoyable concert at London's Royal Albert Hall last week. "The Old" was the age-old problem of untutored musicians having to devote much time to tuning their instruments on stage.



"What I'm doing now is what I wanted for The Hollies": Nash being interviewed in London, October 28, 1970



To date their recording score is just the one album, but when they left LA they were within four days of completing their second. Title is *Déjà Vu*, which roughly means a feeling of having been somewhere or done something before.

— MELODY MAKER JANUARY 10 —

TOPANGA CANYON, SW7... As Stephen Stills and Neil Young break up in fits of glee after playing some "telepathic bluegrass music" on a couple of guitars in a sumptuous flat high above the concrete buttes and asphalt scrubland of Knightsbridge. Crosby, Stills, Nash, Young and Taylor are in town, with Reeves The Bass, having missed three planes from America, expected at any moment. They're happy to talk, happy to sit around and play, just like they do in their California homes.

Dave Crosby: moustachioed and hilarious, persuading Young to teach him the secret art of eating a boiled egg with a sliver of toast. Ex-Byrd. Steve Stills: a son of the South in every way except his mind, blond-haired, clear-blue-eyed, soft-speaking, creator of songs from "Bluebird" to

"I have got a bit paranoid about the police in Los Angeles"

that the vocals were almost completely lost in the complex textures of the backings.

"I've remixed it and its being remastered and reissued so that people will be able to hear it properly," he said. "And I'm working out some sort of deal with the record company so that the people who bought it originally will be able to take it into a record shop and exchange it for a new copy. »

"Helplessly Hoping" and beyond. Ex-Buffalo Springfield. Graham Nash: thin, bearded and energetic; contented and free at last to write "Pre-Road Downs" and "Lady Of The Island", Ex-Hollies. Neil Young: genius. A broken voice now finding the true path, which is working with CSN&Y and also with Crazy Horse. Two statements: "The Loner" and "Cowgirl In The Sand". Also ex-Springfield.

Greg Reeves (the absent) and Dallas Taylor: the rhythm section, and a damn good one it has to be to work with this band, Reeves is ex-Motown; Taylor is a beautiful open person in a wild Western shirt. Posing for a photograph, Crosby calls a halt because "we're a six-man band and Greg ain't here yet". That's how close they are. Listening to Steve picking on his guitar and Neil hammering country/gospel cadences on the piano, you can see that, for them, playing music is where it's at. It's fun all the way in sunny Topanga Canyon, even when it's almost snowing outside in Knightsbridge.

Neil Young's "Nowadays Clancy Can't Even Sing" was far and away the standout of the otherwise undistinguished first album from the late Buffalo Springfield, and through "Broken Arrow" to "The Old Laughing Lady", one has watched the growth of a very individual talent.

Young, a Canadian whose father is one of his country's most respected political columnists, was a member of the Springfields, that most underrated of groups which broke up mainly because of the unhealthy atmosphere of competition which existed within the band.

While Steve Stills joined Graham Nash and

David Crosby, Neil went deeper into his own music, producing two albums under his own name for Warner/Reprise before becoming the fourth part of Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young.

"I needed that time in-between to get my bearings, to get my head in the right place," he told me.

"When the Springfields broke up I felt I couldn't work in a group context—and I certainly never realised I'd be in a group with Steve again, even though I guessed that we'd probably be playing together sometime.

"Now I think I've reached just about the perfect state. I'm part of the group, which I really dig, and I can also express myself as an individual through my own things. And I need very badly to make my own music, partly because it boosts my ego to the required dimension."

Neil's first solo album was almost completely ruined by modern technology. The pressing plant at the record company managed, in some mysterious way, to press the record so

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"Most certainly. It took me and Jack Nitzsche a month to put down the tracks for 'Old Laughing Lady'. I write in spasms—I did most of the songs for the second album in one month, and after something like that I won't write anything for weeks and weeks, maybe.

"We did a lot of work on the first album—everything was overdubbed to get that breadth of sound. But really I like to record naturally, I'd rather put the voice

down at the same time as the backing tracks."

Neil is currently working with Crazy Horse, a group formerly called The Rockets, with whom he made his second album, *Everybody Knows This Is Nowhere*, and he is in the process of completing another album with them which will, he says, contain elements of both previous records. After this week's concert he flies back to the States to work on the scores for two movies, *The Landlord* and *Strawberry Statement*, both apparently products of Hollywood's new "low budget" thinking.

Neil plans to record at least one of the scores on his new 16-track recording unit, which is currently being installed in his Topanga Canyon home.

His final words: "Listen, if you're ever around LA, come around and hear how that first album's REALLY supposed to sound. It'll knock you out."

I'm certain that Neil Young will continue to knock more and more people out with his unique songs of despair and alienation—and, once in every while, happiness.

— MELODY MAKER JANUARY 10 —

"DON'T BUILD ME up into a pop star. I'm no different from you or anybody else. It's just that, because I'm a musician, I can put music to people's thoughts."

Stephen Stills, talking about his position in society. Like many of his generation growing up inside the terror of the Great American Dream gone broke, Stills talks music and politico-sociology with equal ease. To him, they are indivisible.

"But music is not the be-all and end-all," he says. "It's a fulcrum around which the movement exists, because it sets people's heads to music and perhaps sometimes says things that they feel inside but can't articulate. It's very scary in the States at the moment. Did you read that the cops busted into a couple of houses in Chicago and Los Angeles a few days ago and mowed down the Black Panthers? Wow..."

"That's why I want to stay in England for a while. It's more... civilised, plus there are a few people I want to play with. I stood up in front of a lot of people during the Vietnam Moratorium in San Francisco recently and read a poem. So if there's a list, I'm on it."

Can he see the seeds of an alternative culture emerging in America?

"Yeah, it's going through its birth-pains. The young people have got to find a new way to live, and they're getting there because history shows that no revolution that has come from the people has ever failed, even if it's had to take a couple of generations to get through. Right from the time of Alexander The Great, that's been a fact. Of course, people are in varying stages of preparing for it. The leaders... well, we're not getting quite as high these days."

"Music is
a fulcrum
around which
the movement
exists"

GETTY

This situation will be reflected in Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young's first movie, a full feature-length picture to be called *Wooden Ships*, and based loosely on the words of that song from their first album.

"We're getting Theodore Sturgeon to write the screenplay; he's a science-fiction writer and I'm pretty sure that it's suitable for him. That should be ready pretty soon."

Briefly, the story centres round the survivors of a nuclear holocaust, who meet up with a South American tribe (I think) and sail off in wooden ships in search of an uncontaminated area where they can begin to build a new civilisation. Steve says that they're trying to get Stanley Kubrick (of 2001 fame) to direct the film.

"It won't be an Arthur C Clarke screenplay, so it won't have the same cold feeling as 2001 – I hope it will be more like Kubrick's earlier films, with the characters laid out so well. It's got to be done properly. If it's too serious you blow it, and if it's too funny you blow it. You've got to strike a balance."

Perhaps we in Britain don't realise just how big CSNY are in America. They've already done 25 concerts in cities which include Chicago (twice), Houston, New York, Dallas, Los Angeles, Salt Lake City and San Francisco.

"We've averaged 14,000 people a concert," says Steve. "Some of the concerts have been in the open air, in football parks, but we're not doing any more of those. You get so many people there it's ridiculous. That essential intimate feeling is lost in a football park, and we're going to concentrate on playing halls with a capacity between 10,000–14,000."

"I never realised I'd be in a group with Steve again": Neil Young and Stephen Stills during the CSNY interview in London, October 28, 1970

Possibly a large percentage of their success can be ascribed to the variety they project throughout their concerts, with four such diverse talents to call on. "We play for two hours, the first hour acoustic and the second half with electronic equipment. Just as people think they're listening to a folk concert, we plug in and WHAM! We're a rock band!"

When I put forward my pet theory, that country-rock hasn't broken big over here because basically country music is a particularly American form, Steve replied, "Well, it all goes back to Elizabethan music and so forth. It may not have been this year's music, but next year. Anyway, I couldn't restrict myself to country music, just as I couldn't restrict myself to the blues. I want to be able to cover it all, to play it all, and I don't see why I shouldn't."

— MELODY MAKER FEBRUARY 28 —

GENIUS, SAYS THE old adage, is an infinite capacity for taking pains. If that's so, then Stephen Stills must be pretty close to it. Because Steve is a very painstaking guy, much more so than the general run of pop musicians, who like to get it down on tape and get off home. "This approach is the basis of a lot of success," he told me in his London hotel the other day.

"There are people, like the Memphis bands and the Nashville bands, who just do it because they know it all in front. They're past the need to work it all out in detail. But for me, it's very different, and it's a matter of very hard work. Like the guy with Creedence Clearwater, for example – their records sound just like they've cut it quick and split, but he spends hours cutting tiny bits out of 16-track tape where the drummer's been dragging, because he knows that it's the beat that sells his records."

"That's how *Sgt Pepper* was made, and I like to take a lot of time to make sure something's just right. I've got more of a capacity for that than anybody else in our band, and sometimes I stay behind working on the

mixes as long as the engineer'll stay with me. Our new album *Déjà Vu* took weeks to record, in San Francisco and Los Angeles. In San Francisco I'd get up at five in the afternoon, have breakfast, go to the studios and stay there till noon the next day, and then go home and collapse. That went on for three weeks.

"Sometimes I have to work to persuade the other guys to do that too. On one of Dave's songs from the new album, I made him play it over and over again until he was dropping asleep over his guitar – then he played it in time, and that was it... finished as far as the playing went."

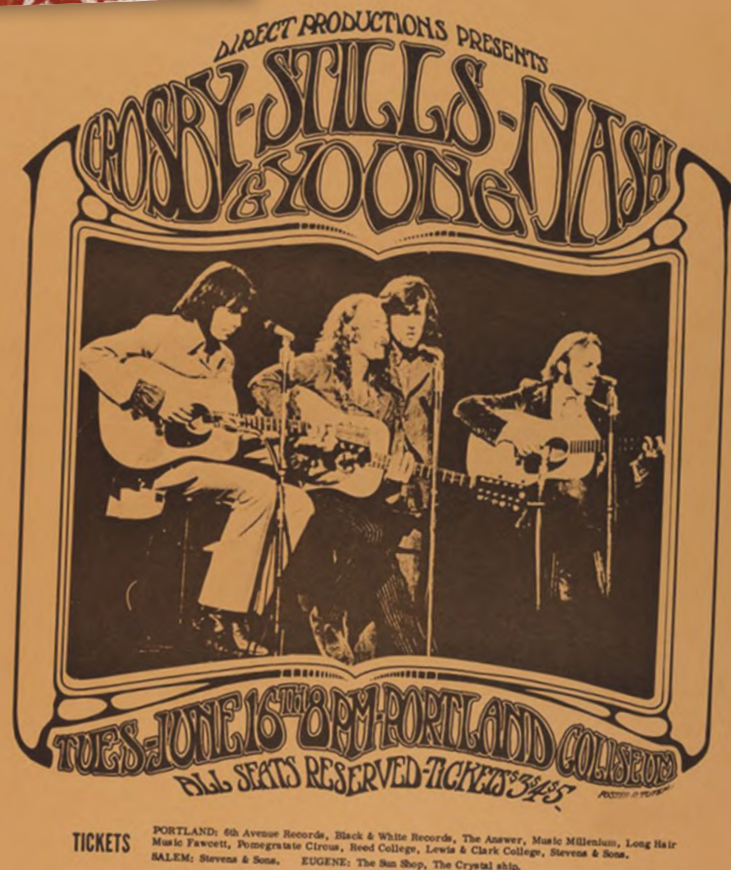
"Neil's songs, too, don't sound the same as the stuff he's done on his own. I worked hard at those, because although that album with Crazy Horse was groovy, you can tell it was cut quickly, with not too much time taken over the sweetening."

"We managed to cut the first album fairly quickly, though, in about a month, because it was still a new experience then and everybody was amenable to suggestions and didn't mind working hard at it. But something like 'Suite: Judy Blue Eyes' still took a lot of time, because we did all the parts separately and there was a lot of splicing and overdubbing. I spent many hours on the guitar part of 'Marrakesh Express' finding the right harmonies to go along with the lead line on the guitar."

Stills is in England at the moment because the group are having a short break after six months of touring. During this break they are all due to record solo albums, and Stills has found it impossible to get studio time in the States. "I've been looking around here, and if I can get some time in Island's new studios I'll cut it there. The situation with time in the studios is really ridiculous – all the places I want to work in the States are booked up through the summer, like Wally Heider's. He's got some sort of deal now with Bones Howe, and Bones gets most of the time at Heider's. This album'll only take me a month, because I've been juggling the ideas around for some time."

"Maybe I'll only need a drummer, and do all the other parts myself, but I know that if I do need somebody else, there are a lot of heavy people around here – like Eric, who'll be back soon."

There's also a chance that Steve might use Ringo Starr on drums, to return the favour that Steve has done him in the past week by playing on Ringo's most recent session. "That was a gas. There was Ringo, me, George Harrison and Klaus »



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It is unusual: the host of TV show *This Is Tom Jones* sings "Long Time Gone" with CSNY, September 1969

[Voorman], plus George Martin. George said the session was for Ringo's 'surprise single', and I guess that could be right. Ringo came in with this little tune – that is, he sat down and played eight bars and said, 'That's it.' So we all made suggestions, like how about adding a bridge here, and playing this little intro, and this little tag, and it came along very nicely.

"I could see why George Martin has been so important to The Beatles – particularly in the form of the songs, in the more sophisticated elements. I thought he was tremendous, and I'd love to have him doing my own album, but I guess I'll use Bill Halverson, because he's so relaxed and he doesn't mind me taking my time. I can say to him, 'Look, can you switch track 15 to track 7, mix in tracks 9 and 12, and put the guitar through the board,' and he doesn't turn a hair. He just does it.

"To get back to the session, though, I suggested this thing where we should use a major 7th chord and it sounded strange at first and the other guys couldn't hear it – but Martin could, and he made another suggestion which made it work perfectly. I guess he's had a lot of effect on them, particularly Paul. I started

listening to them at the time of *Beatles For Sale* – that's still where I'm at, incidentally, and so is everybody else – and maybe at that time they were at their biggest and most isolated, and thus at their closest. So many times John would come in with some intuitive idea for a song, and Paul and George Martin would kick it around, and the finished product would come out really neat.

"The whole scene is getting a lot looser. In a little while there'll be maybe 15 guys who can all play together in any combination, which is a real antidote to staleness. It's not just a question of the same old faces; it'll just

be a lot freer and less competitiveness, because whether somebody's better than somebody else doesn't count for anything anymore. Competitiveness is what kills music."

Crosby, Stills, Nash, Young, Taylor and Reeves' recent Albert Hall concert came in for some of the most mixed criticism ever received by a rock concert, with no two critics seemingly able to agree. Stills confirmed the impression that the band, too, had mixed feelings.





were friendly, but all around the boxes were full—of bands.

“There’s nowhere else in England I’d rather play than there, but people do seem to go to a concert at the Albert Hall in a set frame of mind. Oh, I can’t intellectualise about that. I only know what I feel about it. We got criticised for spending a long time tuning up, which is partly justified because I like to tune up while I’m playing a little bit of music, so that it doesn’t sound unpleasant. But when Neil gets nervous he plays very hard and puts his guitar out of tune and then has to tune it back again.” *Richard Williams*

— NME MAKER NOVEMBER 7 —

IT IS AN autumn afternoon and there is the smell of new paint and the air is hot and dry in the elegant space of the Chelsea apartment block where Mr Graham Nash has taken rooms during his current visit to this country. He peppers his conversation with the perennial clichés of pop—“good vibrations”, “groovy, man”—and from time to time the roundness of his Salford accent is no match for the Americanisation of his dialogue.

One knows from his words, and music, however, that behind Nash’s over-jived pose and prose there is a real human being waiting to get out. And the man who gave us Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young has to be worth listening to. With one exception, this is his first return to England in two years... and the fact is that he revels in the changes the months have brought him.

Listen to him talk about the person he’s become since those frustrated days with The Hollies; the direction he’s headed; and the things that make his music tick...

“I work best in America because I’m surrounded by people who inspire me, man. They’re the people with whom I wanna make music. David, David Crosby, has just gone back to New York on some business. We were approached to do a tour together, and maybe we will. Until then—well, I’ll just stay here in England till I feel like moving on, I guess.

“An incredible amount has happened to me in two years, man. December the 8th, 1968, I played with The Hollies, and December the 10th I was rehearsing with David and Stephen.

“I’m not where I want to be in life, no. I’m never exactly where I want to be; I’m just getting closer. Only for a matter of hours can you experience total happiness—and then it goes away, and you’re on a bummer again.

“What I am doing now is what I wanted for The Hollies. This, now, is exactly what I was looking for. And I just can’t believe how easy it is to work with the people I’m with. There are just no doors with them, man. You go in the studio and everyone will listen to what everyone else has got to say, and we all build it, and hold it down, and polish it like a jewel.

“With The Hollies I just came across too many psychological doors. They probably won’t even understand what I’m saying, but I felt very restricted. I really did, man—although the way we made records was pretty loose. But I just felt restricted. It’s not that it came down to people in the end. It was just the preconceptions The Hollies had been conditioned to... their ability to take a look at themselves.”

I mentioned the Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young appearance on the recent Tom Jones TV show, and said there were those who thought their involvement somewhat, er, unexpected.

Laughter. “Are you kiddin’? The opportunity to play up to Tom Jones—how could anybody miss that? I thought it was the funniest thing since

“That was the first time we’ve ever really been affected by nerves,” he said. “We’ve played to audiences who’ve been much more unfriendly at the outset, but they’ve given us a standing ovation after the first number.

“At the Albert Hall we felt somehow as if we were on trial, as if they’d come to judge us rather than to enjoy our music. The people in front were friendly, and the people above

Kelloggs. I loved it, man. I mean, that show was so f——— jive that it’s incredible. Man, we f——— jumped at the chance. In another respect it was really groovy, though, because I have a tape of the show mixed the way I would have done it. I tell you something, though—that show was two years old; it was the first TV we did; and we stopped doing television as a direct result.

“How much of my time is spent doing nothing? As much as I can get, man—because when I’m doing nothing, I’m re-energising and devoting time to myself, giving myself the same energy that I put into other people.”

He sits back on the settee, the eyes of his lived-in face closed for a moment, and I asked him about conceit. I tell him that at one time there were those who thought his ego over-dominant. Were they wrong?

“Er, well, my ego was larger then. So how’s that for an ego statement? Phew! The fact is that I suddenly discovered I was writing the only music that was turning me on. I guess I just felt I was writing more real songs, and not contrived songs. The music that I felt in my head wasn’t really getting onto the tape and I was really p——— off because I knew the ability of The Hollies could do it. But the same energy wasn’t going in that

I was putting in. If it had been, we could have had tapes that were five times as good.

“As far as ego goes, though, every artist needs it. It’s the thing that wants to make his art better. There are different levels of ego, anyway—mine is the one that wants me to improve myself.”

I asked him how he felt about the current Crosby, Stills & Nash bootleg album, *Wooden Nickel*. “I’m obviously concerned. It’s bad s——— they’re putting out. If they were putting decent s——— out then I wouldn’t worry too much. It’s all negative, because they’re making money for nothing and they’ll get what’s coming sooner or later.

“For something recorded out of one microphone in front of one of the PA

speakers... for that to have my name on infuriates me. That’s why I’m angry. And we’re losing a lot of money, too, y’know. And that concerns me to a certain extent.”

We talked about Apple: “The original concept, to help people, that was a fine idea. It’s working, too, in that in a sense there are now millions of Apples working all over the place. For instance, there are artistic friends of mine whose art I respect and who I am helping. When I got to New York recently I called my office—and they said that someone on Paul McCartney’s behalf had called, so I called him and I spoke to Linda for 10 minutes. Not Paul—just Mrs McCartney!

“I think that what happened with Paul McCartney is what happens with most creators. They try and help worldwide, and then find that’s impossible and that they have to go the other way, just to sort themselves out. Most of us are like that. You sort yourself out, and then your foot starts tapping again. I find it incredibly easy to love—incredibly.

“I love people. I love things. That suit you’re wearing now is doing incredible things for me, doing wonderful things for my eyes. As far as loving the ladies goes, I can’t spend time with ladies who don’t make me feel good. And when I commit myself to spending time with one particular lady, she’s got to be really special.”

Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young’s next album will be a double live one, *Four Way Street*, says Nash, and then a series of solo albums will follow. “For my own,” he tells me, “I have five basic tracks. Would you like to hear them?”

I say I would, and on the record player he plays five beautiful songs, all with an air of melancholy entwined with quiet eroticism. Nash The Man remains, still, a little bumptious around the edges.

But inside his mind there are sensitive images and a fine, consistent talent. And that’s what matters. *Alan Smith •*

NASH and his EGO

It’s essential

IT is an autumn afternoon and there is the smell of new paint and the air is hot and dry in the elegant space of the Chelsea apartment block where Mr Graham Nash has taken rooms during his current visit to this country.

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SINGLES
REVIEW
1970

"Is it at the right speed?"

MM JAN 10 Pink Floyd's Roger Waters reviews the singles.

SINGLES

Canned Heat
Let's Work Together
LIBERTY

It's got some quite nice slide guitar on it. It reminds me a bit of Leadbelly. I know it's Canned



Heat because I saw the label when we were trying to mend the record player - but I admit I wouldn't have sussed it out. I quite like this - in fact, I like this sort of blues record - although I feel that most of it has been done better before. I mean I don't think this says it any better than it was said 30 years ago. It has an optimistic lyric.

The Rascals
Hold On

ATLANTIC

Well I never! When I listen to things like that and don't know who they are, I start to wonder if they are black or white or grey.



There's the old Ray Charles piano, or pianette, in there and the drums at the front in the modern mode. I have never seen Delaney & Bonnie but I imagine this is rather how they sound. It's not really the kind of thing I'm interested in.

Flaming Youth
Guide Me, Orion FONTANA

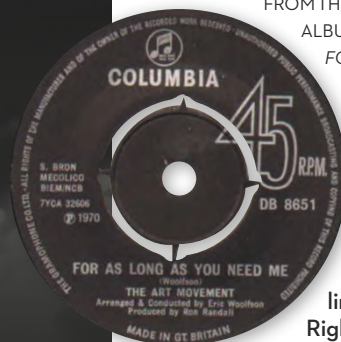
Good lord! What a laugh! I think that sums that up, without wishing to be glib. For a start, I didn't like the



harmonies on the vocals. It's all a bit sunshine-is-golden-ish for me. I can't believe the lyrics were written seriously, there must be a bit of tongue-in-cheek going on. It's very contrived. To be fair, I suppose it was a sincere attempt to aim something at an imagined public state of mind which doesn't in fact exist. All that pastoral stuff gleaned from things that have come out over the past five years and stuck together!

New York Rock & Roll Ensemble
I'm Too Busy

FROM THE POLYDOR
ALBUM *FLATTERING*
FOE



Is this at the right speed? Well, er, well, er... They nearly got the bass line from The Righteous

Brothers' "Lovin' Feelin'" right at the beginning. Then it sounded like an understudy for Jimi Hendrix coming through a Selmer Little Giant. With all that alliteration, the lyric sounds like something Pete Townshend might have written - when he was four. It's very weedy.

The Art Movement
For As Long As You Need Me
COLUMBIA

I've no idea who it is but it could be any one of five million groups. It's the old conception of taking an Artist, with a capital A, and a Song, with a capital S, written by Pop, with a capital P, Song Writers, with a capital S and W, and a Tune, with a capital T, and mix them all together. And what do you get? A load of rubbish. That is the other path of pop music. That really is the other side from all the performers who are staggering about making sounds they think are good, making sounds for reasons. This

ROGER WATERS of Pink Floyd
the latest sounds in Blind Date

Roger's Blind Date was conducted despite the initial disaster of discover-

For a start I didn't like the harmonies on the vocals. It's all a bit sunshine-is-golden-ish for me. I can't believe

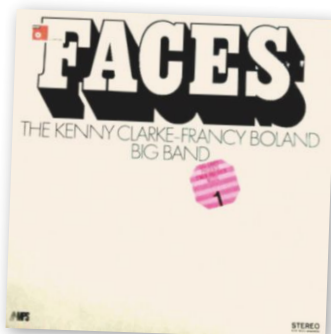
sounds they think are good, making sounds for reasons. This seems to be reasonable. It's not really worth

seems to be reasonable. It's not really worth talking about.

**Kenny Clarke-Francy Boland
Big Band**
Solarisation

FROM THE POLYDOR LP *FACES*

That second section sounded very Ellington-ish, though the rest didn't. I do like that sort of music though, I don't know what I can say about it. It's the kind of thing that if we heard it on the way up the M1 it would get us all miming, if you know what I mean.



Syd Barrett
Terrapin

FROM THE HARVEST LP *THE MADCAP LAUGHS*, PART OF WHICH WAS PRODUCED BY ROGER

(Laughs) This is a track I didn't produce because it didn't need anything doing to it. This song makes everything else you have played me look completely sick and silly. I think this is very beautiful. Don't take it off, I'm going to listen to it all the way through. I think this is a great song. In fact, all the songs on this album are great. No, some of them on it are great - in capital letters - and all of them are good. Syd is a genius.

Black Sabbath
Evil Woman

FONTANA

There you go! Well, well, well! I'm speechless - well almost. It's got that kind of *Dragnet*, *Peter Gunn*, and American detective series beginning. You keep thinking it's going to start. You think that for the first minute, but then, if you are really perceptive, you realise it isn't going to start and that's all there is.



ALBUMS

Robin Gibb *Robin's Reign* POLYDOR

This is the first album from Robin since he left the now defunct Bee Gees. He composed all 11 tracks, produced the whole lot and took the choir's part as well. He writes excellent, interesting songs spoilt only for me by his rather forced vocal style which tends to make some of his songs sound contrived and similar. But he undoubtedly has talent, and for Gibb fans this album will not be a disappointment. It includes his single hit "Saved By The Bell".

Royston Eldridge, MM Jan 17

Kevin Ayers *Joy Of A Toy* HARVEST

Joy, beauty and mystery abound in this album by the former Soft Machine guitarist. His songs are simple but fascinating, with the warm, hazy and sometimes sinister feel of songs half-remembered from distant childhood. The arrangements, featuring the Soft Machine on some tracks, capture the spirit of the thing perfectly - subtle, mysterious, richly textured and delicately funky. There really hasn't been an LP quite like it. Harvest deserve praise for allowing Mr Ayers to do his thing; he's come up with a gem.

Alan Lewis, MM Jan 17

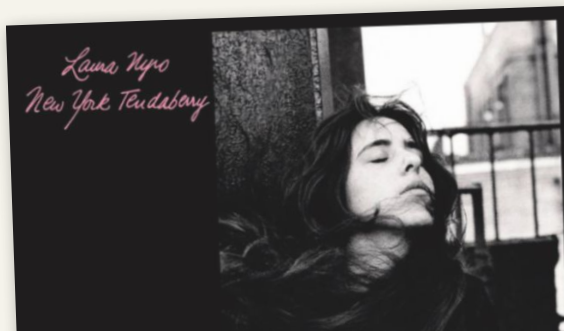
David Ackles *Subway To The Country* ELEKTRA

A second beautiful album by singer/writer/pianist David Ackles, composer of "Road To Cairo". His is a distinctive voice in an overcrowded field, warm and mature but touched with the sadness and occasional bitterness of a loner who has spent years on the road. He avoids the facile philosophising and obscure imagery of many of his contemporaries. Production is up to Elektra's usual high standard, but some superfluous string and woodwind arrangements intrude on some tracks.

Alan Lewis, MM Jan 17

Miles Davis *In A Silent Way* COLUMBIA

Something new again from Miles and in its own gentle, low-key, lyrical genre it's absolutely perfect. Any doubts raised by a look at the lineup can be dispelled at once; electric pianos, guitar and organ dovetail into slabs of beautiful and constantly changing sound. The discipline displayed all round is quite remarkable. Essentially, the shifting textures are what this record is all about, but there are many individual gems glittering in there too. Miles is at his most restrained, yet conveys complete authority with every note placed in exactly the right place and lasting exactly the right length of time. Shorter is superb on soprano - utterly individual in both tone and approach... You never heard such pure sound from a soprano before. McLaughlin is



ALBUMS 1970

also magnificent, saying more in one bent note than a thousand other guitarists can say in a finger-busting run. Zawinul contributes a delightful

theme and uses

the organ most intelligently to fill out against the electric pianos and guitar. Tony Williams is unbelievably subtle, while Dave Holland keeps his head up in the most exalted company in jazz. A beautiful record. Bob Dawbarn, MM Jan 31

Laura Nyro *New York Tendaberry* COLUMBIA

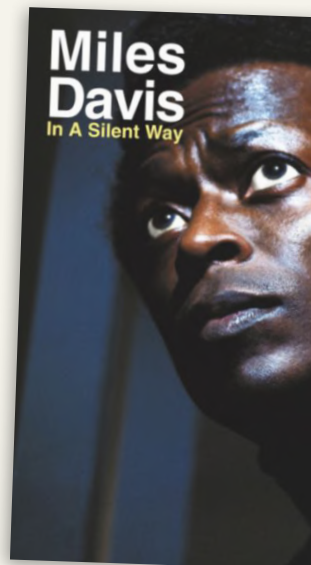
Laura Nyro is a member of that select band of female singers who can do nothing but express their own truths. That, perhaps, is part of the reason why she is not yet a superstar; because she hides behind no masks, erects no barriers between herself and the music, she can easily frighten off the timid listener. Invariably, one has the feeling when listening to her that she sings because she has to, because she must express her own innermost fears and lusts. She never appears to be singing for anyone but herself, and her words are drawn out, the vowels distorted and the consonants slurred. But it doesn't matter, because the emotions are unmistakably clear. Her songs are immediately identifiable: their contours are her own, and behind the happiest is a longing, bitter-sweet quality which reeks of desperation. She constantly unsettles the listener with abrupt halts, tempo changes, and high held notes which grate on the brain. Like Billie Holiday, Laura Nyro looks into her own soul - through a glass, darkly. The vision, if not lovely, is at least unique.

Richard Williams, MM Jan 31

Rod Stewart *An Old Raincoat Won't Ever Let You Down* VERTIGO

Rod "The Mod" Stewart commands a lot of respect among pop people for his unusual blues voice, and this album does him full justice. He has gathered a bunch of well-known musicians to accompany him on eight songs, five of which are his own compositions. His version of the Stones' "Street Fighting Man" is a real rocker, with Small Face Ian McLagan (piano) and guitarists Martin Pugh and Ronnie Wood (another Face) in great form. The treatment the song is given highlights Rod's vocal power. Mike D'Abo's splendid song "Handbags And Gladrag's" has been altered to suit Rod's style and it is without the frenzy of Chris Farlow's hit, but with a lot of emotion and some nice woodwinds. "Cindy's Lament" is one of Rod's own numbers and mainly an instrumental; it's forceful and includes good drum work by Micky Waller. Ewan McColl's

"Dirty Old Town" is a good blues number that Rod handles very well to round off a very worthy album which deserves to do well. Richard Green, NME Feb 21



“I am a religious nutcase”

Peter Green increasingly looks more like he belongs in the Bible, not FLEETWOOD MAC. While the band returns from a profitable American tour, the guitarist plans to give away his money. “I know what it’s like on £5 a week,” he says.

— NME FEBRUARY 28 —

“**Y**OU DON’T THINK it’s too expensive, do you?” asked Peter Green earnestly as he reversed his £700 white Jaguar out of a car park in Richmond park. “If you look around, most of the other cars

here... that one and even that one... would cost more than £700, and Mick and John’s cost a lot more than that.”

Looking every day more like a character out of the massive bound Bible that sits on a shelf in the middle of his extensive stereo collection, the heavily hairy Fleetwood Mac leader is home after the group’s three-month stretch in America wanting to give his money away. Not all of it, but all that he feels is in excess of his share. His passing obsession with the price of his car—he would have liked an AC Cobra but that would have cost at least twice as much—comes from attitudes that have grown to fruition during his spell in the States.

Peter wants to help—financially—the starving and those that fail to get a good education and opportunities, and had been explaining earlier, “My parents and I have got our house. I’ve got my car, which isn’t really expensive, and, and I’m happy with that. I’ve also got my stereo and most of the records I want. All in all it’s a very good helping, if you look at it in terms of each person’s share, so I am satisfied with what I’ve got. And there are so many people who haven’t got anything at all, I feel the least I can do is give away my excess.”

“Not that I have millions and millions, but there are going to be some big chunks coming in compared to what the average man earns. I haven’t had any of my song writing money yet »

GETTY



"I feel the least I can do is
give away my excess";
Fleetwood Mac's Peter
Green on stage in Barnet,
North London in 1970

and there's all that to give. Then there's my share of the advance from Reprise Records, £18,000. That's money to give. I've had these ideas for a long time; now I'm going to act on them. There must be no starvation. Just because somebody is born on the other side of the world that is no reason why they should be starving for it.

"I am not going into poverty with them, although I did think of doing that. It would perhaps have made me feel better. This way the more money I earn the more I can give away. Doing that is easy – maybe one day I will put myself to work as well – but at the moment I think that by going round and playing to and meeting people I can do much in that way.

"What other people do with their money is none of my business, but I know what it is like to earn £5 a week and have a good laugh and to earn £500. I can be just as happy... like when I was a butcher earning a fiver a week. I do feel guilty about squandering money on myself, but I am now going to be careful. I have felt that a lot... even when I eat sometimes. The very least I can do is give away that money I don't need, and anyone who thinks money is going to make them happy is so wrong.

"I would love to go yachting, I love cars. I would like to buy an AC Cobra, but the thing is that before I do that I would like to know that everyone is getting their bowlful of rice every day."

Peter also hopes to do charity shows with the group – "That would be better, because then I won't have to touch the money" – and the first is a Fleetwood Mac performance at the London Lyceum on April 12 in aid of Jewish old people. There will of course be sceptics who question the reasons behind his benevolence, but they get a typical Green retort: "It's my business what I do. Anyone who's sceptical can go and get...!"

We'd driven out from Peter's New Malden home with Jane, the group's fan club secretary, and were sitting next to the window in some terribly, terribly English tea rooms watching the squirrels hop around the park. It was a far cry from the Holiday Inn, turnpike, airport and hamburger trail that had been the group's lot for the past three months

"What's John Lennon been doing while we've been away?" asked Peter, and, after he'd been regaled with up-to-date Lennonisms, professed a deep admiration for the Beatle's work for peace.

"I really enjoyed the tour," he said later. "Our American agent who books lots of British bands like Jethro Tull, Ten Years After, etc, said that in terms

of a group leaping upwards in status it was one of the most successful he'd been associated with. We felt we'd made an important foothold. Of course there were lots of ups and downs and times when we got under each other's feet, but the feeling on the plane coming home was so good that if we'd been asked to turn around and go back again I think we all would."

Like most of our group visitors, he finds the American situation depressing but sees the good side even in areas like the Deep South if there is at least one "nice" person to meet.

"In some places it is just a talkative taxi driver, like the fellow in Maryland who knew England. But we did make a lot of new friends there."

Was there anything in rumours of Danny Kirwan planning to leave the group? "I would say no, but obviously you'd have to ask Danny that, because I've walked off stage before thinking I've had enough. And obviously there are going to be times like that with all groups on tour. I'd say that, like the last time we came back from America, the band is closer than it has ever been and Danny and I are now working and playing together, which we haven't done before."

Peter went on to disclose that Danny and he are planning an album together based round their two lead guitars and that he is to record a solo album for release at Christmas: "One of the songs on it I wrote in Chicago when it was snowing... it's a sort of poem set to music... and I'd like it to be heard in that sort of atmosphere."

The group has also brought back tapes of three shows they did at the Boston Tea Party, and these will be edited for a live album "when we get the time. We've got about 20 new numbers as well and we should really be recording now. But we've got so much touring to do."

Contrary to reports, "The Green Manalishi" has not been chosen as their next single. It is, says Peter, just one from a batch of tracks they'll record and then pick from. We got back onto our earlier subject and through that onto the need for opportunity, Peter's peace of mind and skinheads. "I come from that kind of background [from Bethnal Green in East London] and I know the skinhead feeling

Fleetwood Mac photographed in Los Angeles in 1969: (l-r) John McVie, Danny Kirwan, Mick Fleetwood, Peter Green and Jeremy Spencer



of trying to prove yourself because you have nothing else. You just want to be someone. Now I feel myself to be more or less someone, I can look at it from both sides.

"I had the feelings I have now when I was a kid in the East End, but I couldn't walk up to people there and be friendly because they would beat your brains out. I think of life as a long pipe you're looking into. When you're born the pipe is open and the inside smooth. Things like a bad family foundation, poverty and lack of opportunity start to corrode the inside until it begins to close up.

"I came from a working-class home and had a good family background, but things around me started to rust the pipe up. That's what happens for lots of people. For me it has now opened up to like it was when I was a little kid. I feel a great brotherliness towards people and I'm not ashamed to feel it."

— NME APRIL 11 —

PETER GREEN HAD just got up; coming down to meet me in the music room of his Surrey home, stretching, smiling abundantly and singing the "sympathy and understanding" verse from "Aquarius" before sitting down amongst the mounting bric-a-brac, records, letters, books, amplifiers and bird cages to tell me why he is leaving Fleetwood Mac.

"There are many reasons: the main thing being that I feel it is time for a change. I want to change my whole life really, because I don't want to be at all a part of the conditioned world and as much as possible I am getting out of it. I am always concerned with what is right with God and what God would have me do... that is the most important thing to me... that dominates every thought in my head. I don't feel I want to be a part of Fleetwood Mac any more... no longer frustrated, free to do what I like."

His mother brought tea and Peter continued, "As you know, there is a whole big movement going on like a revolution. I want to be a part of that, so that whatever I do – whether I form another group or not – I need to be with people who feel exactly the same as I do: that is, they don't worry about security in terms of money. We will be doing a lot of free concerts as long as they are not being promoted for private gain.

"I want to get 100 per cent into music. I want to do lots of jamming with different groups and musicians. I want to do all I can to bring people to God and peace... full time, not just now and again. I want to be completely free to do what I like."

He had, he said, been thinking of leaving for some time and had broken the news to the rest of the band in Munich a few weeks ago.

"I was cut down," he went on, "by being a third of the group's front line. That was quite fun when it started, but after a while I felt I couldn't get into anything because after a couple of numbers I would have to step back to let the others have their chance. They were disturbed when I told them and shook up a bit.

"The thing about Fleetwood Mac was that people may think I was the main person in the group because the singles were my songs, but on stage all of us have always been only parts of the group. In Germany, for instance, Jeremy has always been the one they've centred on.

The rest of the band will definitely carry on as Fleetwood Mac, put in manager Clifford



Davis, who had joined us, although it hadn't been decided whether to take on a replacement. They would take a rest after Peter's last date with them on May 25 to decide which way to go, and he thought it likely there would be a new guitarist.

I asked Peter why he can't do what he wants within the framework of Fleetwood Mac.

"I could try but I know it wouldn't work out... I want to do my own things and do them at length. I want to do them with people who think like me, who want to be into it full time. I know they would be willing to play them, but the kind of music I want demands that it is a personal thing felt within everyone's heart and not just a piece of music to be played. It has to be 100 per cent.

"You see, I am not happy with the way my life is being run. There is no rest. No time to do anything, to

develop my character. It is like I am a nine-to-five worker, but it is worse because at least they get evenings off. Always pounding away on stage, I don't have any time to be me.

"It's not enough just to be successful... It has become a business, and I don't want to be a part of a business. I never did a deliberate hit record... I can say that... I never got into it to that extent.

"I want out of the cut-and-dried business angle... the feeling that it's good if we and the promoter make a good screw and go down well at the same time... I don't want to be a part of that. I want it to be a good free thing for people... just to play music and give it to people.

"In other words I am a religious nutcase," he laughed.

I put it back to him that although he might be laughing, isn't that what a great many people would think... that he is a crank?

"It will be funny if they do," he replied. "But only the business people will, because they think anyone who doesn't want to be rich is a nutcase. I am no more religious than the average Christian."

Apart from jamming and playing, Peter's plans include firstly recording a solo album that's likely to end up a double set. He thinks it would be nice if the record company agree for him to waive his royalties so it can be sold as cheaply as possible.

"I don't want any money," he says, echoing his feelings from the last interview we did when he announced his intention of giving his excess earnings to charities. "Just enough to buy tapes, equipment, keep the house and have food to eat."

He says he wants to make his music for the "peaceful young"... "those for whom listening to music is like a religion... but to others as well who want to listen."

He feels his leaving will bring more out of Jeremy and says, "I have become the speaker for the band, but Jerry used to do that. As I found

my feet and confidence, Jerry has sunk back. In my opinion he is a genius, but because there are three of us at the front he cannot get fully into it. He is the funniest person I have ever met – he's incredible – and he also has so much to offer musically."

And finally: "You see, it's been a great thing for me to be brought up in the East End with all the violence there and to manage to live through that kind of upbringing and find God and people who think the same way. I want to give that feeling to as many people as I can..." Nick Logan •

"It's become a business, and I don't want to be part of a business"

WHY PETER GREEN QUIT FLEETWOOD MAC (see centre pages)

PETER GREEN had just got up; coming down to meet me in the music room of his Surrey home, stretching, smiling abundantly and singing the "sympathy and understanding" verse from "Aquarius" before sitting down amongst the mounting bric-a-brac, records, letters, books, amplifiers and bird cages to tell me why he is leaving Fleetwood Mac.

"There are many reasons: the main thing being that I feel it is time for a change. I want

But it doesn't mean the end



1970

JANUARY–MARCH

“There is a powerful astrological force”

— MELODY MAKER FEBRUARY 14 —

“**G**IT YOUR HAIR CUT.” A battered Vauxhall rattled through the village of Pangbourne and a grinning passenger desperately wound down his window to deliver a crushing blow of invective.

“We’ve made his day,” observed Jimmy Page brightly, as the car disappeared 10-year testily round a bend and the passenger twisted round in his seat to observe the effects of his perfunctory condemnation of the long-haired stranger daring to venture abroad.

Prejudice and ignorance always overpower me. My response and ignorance always overpower me. My response to the minor incident was to give an impotent vee-sign and suppress a desire to throw a brick. But like dwarfs and long-distance runners in baggy shorts, those who chose to wear their hair in its natural state develop a philosophical urbanity towards men who express xenophobia by jeering. »

GETTY

How else to account for the success of **LED ZEPPELIN**? An in-depth encounter with **JIMMY PAGE** reveals plenty about the band’s wealth, motivations and remarkable rise. “It’s been quite a year...”

“I’ve been asking myself if we were progressive”: Jimmy Page at a press conference before Led Zeppelin’s show at the Los Angeles Forum on September 4, 1970



Small children escaping from school tittered as we continued our progress in search of food.

"He's one of THEM," gasped one, daringly. "Even kids don't like me," pondered the young guitarist idolised by several million young people throughout Western Europe, the North American continent and Australasia. "It's the way their parents bring them up, I suppose. It must be the long hair they don't like. Oh no – it's the trousers. That's what's doing it." He muttered to himself without appearing unduly worried.

In a newsagents, where a weekly bill had to be paid, the proprietor burst out with a bluff and jovial greeting, and held up a copy of a magazine with the Page features emblazoned on the cover.

"Ah, you're doing well then?" he quizzed, hoping for personal confirmation of Jimmy's status. He was politely proffered payment but withheld any intimate chat. Our eyes were on an Olde Tea Shoppe which, even at 3pm, looked as if it might have something more than tea available.

A little old lady peered at the hairy invasion with fear. "Yes?" she asked, tight-lipped and unsmiling. Gently, Jimmy asked if steaks were still available, and when it became apparent our conversation was not to be loud and spiced with oaths and we would not demolish the glassware or furniture, she relaxed and a nod of acceptance showed her heart had stopped pounding.

It is a strong and fragile world that Jimmy and his fellow elite of successful groupdom inhabit. An object of suspicion, envy and exaggerated idolatry, it requires intelligence and tact to cope with the situation. Jimmy has money. He also has charm, wit and a lot of talent. The Led Zeppelin success story is probably the most well-adjusted and certainly the happiest among groups to have captured the imagination of rock-hungry audiences. Much stems from Jimmy's drive and purposeful common sense often smoke-screened by a soft voice and diffident manner. One should not fail to note the hard edge that occasionally creeps into his voice or the glint in the eyes.

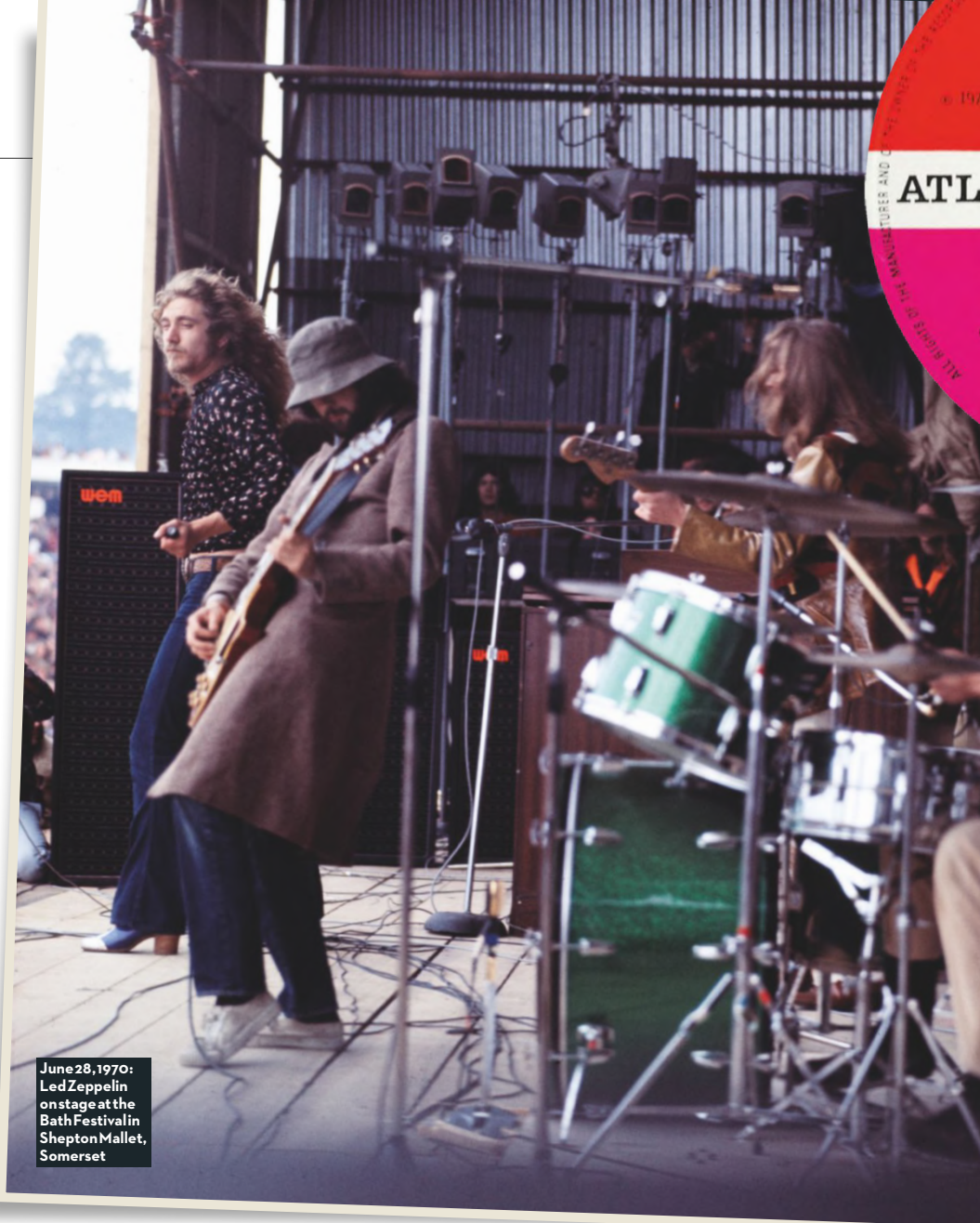
American fans have often expressed surprise at the number of fine guitarists who emerged in Britain during the '60s group boom. While Eric Clapton, Jeff Beck, Peter Green, Alvin Lee and more were building their reputations at home, Jimmy was regarded as rather an obscure if legendary figure. He was known as the Guv'nor among guitarists. As a brilliant young session player, he was unknown to fans jamming the blues clubs. When he emerged from the studios to join The Yardbirds – they practically emigrated to America. He was to remain a mystery to most at home until November 1968, when Led Zeppelin was born.

At that time, Cream, who had pioneered the heavy instrumental rock band, were in their death throes. Zeppelin were not consciously created to fill their role. But that is what happened with a startling swiftness. As often happens, the home country was the last to hear about it. America loved them.

"The biggest happening since The Beatles," was the cry when I went to New York with the band for their Carnegie Hall debut last autumn. And while aware of the extent of their album sales, the tumultuous reception New York gave Jimmy, Robert Plant, John Paul Jones and John Bonham still came as a mild case of amazement.

Both their albums have gained Gold and Platinum Awards for something in excess of four million sales. They have never issued a single – officially at least. The Board of Trade recently honoured them at the Savoy Hotel, London for their contribution towards exports and industry. Git your hair cut.

GETTY



June 28, 1970: Led Zeppelin onstage at the Bath Festival in Shepton Mallet, Somerset

After steak, coffee and toasted scones with home-made jam, we tiptoed from the old lady's tiny tea shoppe, strolled back in the chill but bracing winter sunshine to Jimmy's rambling wooden boat house beside the Thames. The Paganini of the '70s, who makes audiences scream by scraping a violin bow across the screeching guitar strings, like so many heroes of rock culture, seeks only peace and isolation when away from the bellowing, lucrative uproar of stadiums and concert halls. If the comparison with Paganini comes as a surprise, it must be said that as a young man, the violinist wore tight trousers, hypnotised women and made them faint, while men said he must be possessed by the Devil, such was the effect of his playing.

It was an oddly magical experience to escape from a London office and join Jimmy at his Berkshire home for a day. Although there is a telephone to maintain contact with business, a railway station on his doorstep, and the threat of motorway development, the emphasis is on tranquility, ease and a return to an almost Edwardian lifestyle. The Thames flows outside his rear porch, rather fast and muddy in February. Swans and ducks poke about. Cows lurch in the fields on the opposite bank. A large white telescope has pride of place in the living room.

He reclined on the arm of a settee, one elegantly fashioned trouser leg crossing the other, hair flowing backwards. Girlfriend Charlotte floated ghost-like to make tea in the kitchen. "I'm changing my telephone number," he revealed. "They tell me I should have done it long ago. We get about 30 or 40 calls a day. I was editing tapes yesterday for the next LP and you need your wits about you for that. There were interruptions all the time, which made it a day-long job. I'm not ex-directory and you can't tell people you're busy. They think you're just trying to get rid of them."

"All this started within the last six months. I bought the house about two-and-a-half years ago when I was with The Yardbirds. There hasn't

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ANTIC SIDE ONE



1. IMMIGRANT SONG (Page/Plant) 2:26
2. FRIENDS (Page/Plant) 3:55
3. CELEBRATION DAY (Page/Plant/Jones) 3:29
4. SINCE I'VE BEEN LOVING YOU (Page/Plant/Jones) 7:25
5. OUT ON THE TILES (Page/Plant/Bonham) 4:04

Warner Bros. Music Ltd

POLYDOR RECORDS LIMITED



been much time to decorate, being away in the States so much, but you wouldn't have believed the scene when I moved in. The previous owner had great garlands of plastic flowers everywhere. She even had a barrow in the corner decorated with plastic flowers. It was like a Norseman's funeral when we threw all the flowers onto the river."

Wandering around the interior revealed a surprising number of oddly shaped rooms and passages, and down below the ground floor was a huge room housing the central heating, a dismantled antique bed, considerable quantities of junk and a motor launch bobbing about in an inlet, waiting for summer. "This is the tub. It's out of action at the moment, but it has a cassette tape machine. You can cruise down the river, switch off the motor and dig all the sounds. I can't wait for the summer. Once the sun comes out, we all go on the river and every day is a holiday."

We continued a tour of the low-ceilinged rooms with sloping floors and muddled piles of valuable paintings, records, model trains and books. Copies of *Man, Myth & Magic* lay around and a huge volume of the works of mystic Aleister Crowley. In one room was a Mutoscope, a hand-cranked seaside peepshow featuring "a gentleman's downfall", involving a lissom lass wearing not unsexy 1926 underwear and a healthy smile.

Parts of the house were freezing cold where central heating has not yet been deployed to combat the creeping river air. But all held the warmth of personality – and a welcome return to traditional English eccentricity. To complete the atmosphere came the visitors. Equally young, rich and eccentric – Roger Daltrey of The Who, and his companion, Heather, swept into the forecourt in a rakish grey Stringray, doubtless capable of appallingly high speeds.

They were out for an afternoon drive, and like good neighbours – they live some six miles away – had dropped by for tea and chat. Roger put up his boots, slightly splashed with mud as befits a landowner, and chatted with Jimmy about the pressing subjects of the day like the shortage of good convertible boat-houses, the ever-rising price of art treasures and the difficulty in selling horse-drawn gipsy caravans. "It was beautiful, made of wood and with two fully fitted rooms. But could I sell the bloody thing? No chance."

Jimmy nodded sympathetically and, after regards had been extended from The Who towards Robert Plant, now recovering at his Kidderminster farm from a recent car accident, Roger and Heather drove home across the shire, 'ere the winter evening drew in.

"Stevie Winwood lives not far away," said Jimmy. "We often get friends dropping in. We don't exactly take part in village life, but it's like the New Renaissance of Berkshire, I suppose. A baronial life in our palatial country retreats," Jimmy laughed.

Git your hair cut. *Chris Welch* •

"We're not a rabble-rousing group. We're trying to play some music"

new trends and groups, there is a tendency towards cynicism, especially among those who interest themselves in progressive rock.

They have learned the meaning of the slang word "hype", which hints at hyperbole and hypocrisy, and neatly sums up the process of falsely exaggerating the popularity and earning power of an artist. The situation has been largely brought upon pop by the policy of management in building up groups with advance publicity which later fails to fulfil its promise – rather like General Election campaigns.

Fans eagerly await a performance or album and are disappointed by a display of careless indifference. "Hype" – goes up the cry. Now there is cynical backlash where groups, teenybop or underground, are suspect if they gain too much BREAD and publicity.

Zeppelin are one of the groups who have experienced sniping, at home and abroad. Says Jimmy Page, "Before they saw us in America there was a blast of publicity and they heard all about the money being advanced to us by the record company. So the reaction was – 'Ah, a capitalist group.' They realised we weren't when they saw us playing a three-hour non-stop show every night.

"And the reason why we played that long was because when we started a year ago we had worked out a one-hour set and onstage this naturally expanded to an hour and a half. As we put in other numbers, this became two hours. In America they wanted encores and it expanded to three hours with the extra material from the second album.

"We enjoy ourselves and that shows in our playing. If somebody wants to hype a group, they only suffer in the end because people understand the economics of bands, especially in the States where it is the fashion to ask who is getting what out of what.

"I'm sure that when Hendrix played a West Coast festival, people knew he was being paid 100,000 dollars. There were a lot of snide remarks, and afterwards he seemed to drop in popularity. If we play at a university, kids say, 'Hey, you're getting £1,000 tonight.' So what? They think £1,000 is a lot of money, but it's not in relation to the expenses of a band with road managers, airfares and hotel bills. But really, money has nothing to do with it. You can tell when a band is being hyped, by their manner. You can tell from the vibrations. I can tell, so I'm sure everyone else can."

Have Zeppelin received much criticism of their music?

"The only criticism came after our Albert Hall concert in London, recently. One reviewer said we got off to a slow start. Well, I don't know if the guy had seen us before, but the idea is to start off with recognisable Zeppelin things, then go much quieter and use acoustic guitar, which is always well received. Then we build it up again.

"You can't possibly have a climax all the way. We like to play a cross-section of styles. We're not a rabble-rousing group. We are trying to play some music. One has to remember, at the Royal Albert Hall concerts, all the tickets were sold out in a day, so they must have been Zeppelin people in the audience who knew what we play."

Did Jimmy think there was a danger of too much being written and said about the "rock revolution"? Isn't it all getting out of hand?

"There shouldn't be a lot more written about it, because pop is going through a very revolutionary stage at the moment. I saw the Jack Bruce film on TV and I was quite amazed. He was tremendous. The whole message was – just listen to the music. That's what it's all about.

"Many classical people listen to pop music. They realise pop is not just a joke. Critics like Tony Palmer in the Sunday newspapers have helped it all to an incredible extent. It's strange, but I never saw the Cream and I had never seen Jack Bruce until his Lyceum concert. I've started going to concerts because I never saw any when I was working so hard touring. You

have to be quick these days to see a group before they split up. I never saw Hendrix or the Cream while we were working in the States, or any other groups unless they were on the same bill as us.

"This has been my first real break in years, although we are working on the third album. We have to keep working all the time. We are working on a film. I don't know if it will ever be shown, really, but we filmed the Albert Hall concert and it will be a documentary on what has been going on with the band.

"Everything's been slowed up with Robert's accident. That was a horrific scene. The police came banging at the door with flashlights and »

— MELODY MAKER FEBRUARY 21 —

WHEN A BAND achieves the Led Zeppelin's kind of success in such a short time, there are bound to be whispered accusations in the corridors of pop. In recent years, fans have become more aware of "The Business". Far from blindly accepting

asked me if I knew a Mr Robert Plant. When they advised me to call him at Kidderminster Hospital I knew it had got to be serious. I was really worried, wondering if he had the baby in the car. He's still in a bad way and we had to cancel some work, although he said he would appear on stage in a wheelchair. He can't lift his arm above his shoulder and he has a cut over his eye.

"We've got a lot of recording to do. On the first album we were finding out about each other. On the second, I really thought John Paul Jones came through strongly. We can feel each other much more.

"I've prepared a lot of acoustic stuff for the next album. It's just a matter of getting into a studio. They are all fully booked – it's incredible. We all do a bit of writing in the group and make tape recording of ideas for songs. I like to get a basic construction together and a number grows from that."

What did Jimmy think of the trend towards jazz-rock?

"I don't like it, personally. I never liked Blood, Sweat & Tears. I'm all for a fusion of ideas, but this is just not my cup of tea, and has not been as well accepted as classical rock. Jazz-rock all rests on the brass players waiting for the chance to play as fast as possible at 78rpm. To me, it represents cacophony. I like and understand Eric Dolphy and John Coltrane. But when you get Fred Bloggs blowing away – it doesn't come off.

"The things Dick Heckstall-Smith plays with Colosseum are good and valid, and they make sense. When it doesn't make sense – I can't be bothered. I was never convinced by Blood, Sweat & Tears, yet lots of people think it's the epitome of pop today. What didn't I like about them? The arrangements and the singer. I couldn't believe that singer. Everything sounds so false after one or two listens. The most progressive groups today are the Pink Floyd and Moody Blues."

Are Led Zeppelin a progressive group?

"I've been asking myself if we were progressive. In fact I've been waiting for somebody to ask me that. I don't know. What we have done is to present rock in a different package. We are not a band like the Floyd, who are really progressive. Maybe our next album will be progressive – for us. People tend to say Pink Floyd are still just a 1967 flower-power group, but they are not. They sound fresh and beautiful."

To ward off the effects of heavy rock interviewing, Jimmy tottered off in search of a few aspirins.

"It's been quite a year," he said on his return. "I can hardly believe how much has happened – four tours of the States and two platinum albums. It sounds like a lot of old bull, but I can't really believe it sometimes. It's like looking at somebody else's career.

"There is a very powerful astrological force at work within the band which I am sure had a lot to do with our success. Robert is a Leo, which makes him a perfect leader, with two Capricorns on either side and a Gemini behind. Leo is always a leader, like Ginger Baker, Keith Moon and Mick Jagger. I'm a Capricorn, which speaks for itself – very stubborn with a split personality." *Chris Welch*

— MELODY MAKER FEBRUARY 28 —

EVA VON ZEPPELIN, a relative of the German airship designer, was "considering legal action if the British pop group Led Zeppelin play in Copenhagen on Saturday", it was reported last week. "They may be world famous," she said, "but a couple of shrieking monkeys are not going to use a privileged family name without permission."

*"Zeppelin, flieg!
Hilf uns im Krieg,
Fliege nach England,
England wird abgebrannt.
Zeppelin, flieg!"*

Thus sang German children marching to school during the Great War. A rough translation goes:

*"Fly, Zeppelin,
Help us in the war,
Fly to England,*



"Stevie Winwood lives not far away": Jimmy Page at his Thameside home in Berkshire, January 1970

*England shall be destroyed by fire.
Fly, Zeppelin!"*

On October 13, 1915 the Zeppelin LZ 15 commanded by Joachim Briethaupt, in a raid on London, bombed the Lyceum Theatre in the Strand.

On October 12, 1969, 54 years later almost to the day, the all-British Led Zeppelin blew a triumphant fanfare of free, peaceful and democratic rock'n'roll in the same Lyceum, a building which escaped onslaughts by machines more deadly still than the old Count's gas bags.

Jimmy Page reacted with little surprise and considerable amusement when told of the new German threat this week. "Then we shall call ourselves the Nobs when we go to Copenhagen," he announced. "The whole thing is absurd. The first time we played in Copenhagen she turned up and tried to stop a TV show. She couldn't, of course, but we invited her to meet us to show we were nice young lads. We calmed her down, but on leaving the studio, she saw our LP cover of an airship in flames and exploded! I had to run and hide. She just blew her top. So – it's shrieking monkeys now! But she is quite a nice person.

"They wanted us to fly in an airship over Montreux, Switzerland once. That's tempting fate, isn't it? I told them to fly without us and say we were inside."

Apart from legal threats, newspapers have made unsolicited suggestions for a new name for Britain's most popular group. One Scottish national called them "Ned Zeppelin". Hearty laughter from Mr Page. "On our next LP sleeve we were planning to print all the weird comments that have been about us. That would have been great – Ned Zeppelin!"

On my second visit to his Thameside boat-house, Jim was in cheery mood. The group had just completed some highly successful concerts. Builders were forging ahead with some cunning alterations to hearth and home. His manager had presented him with a Bentley, and just to brighten up the day, the ancient penny peepshow installed in his



bedroom had decided to work. As gales beat about the wooden walls and a rowing eight struggled manfully upstream past the living-room windows, Jimmy strummed a merry guitar. "I've been practising three hours a day. Unfortunately, there has been a great lack of practice in the last year or so. I play a long improvised solo to get fluency and then attempt a difficult phrase to see if I can pull it off."

"I'd like to be able to play piano. It sounds strange. I can play guitar with finger-style independence, but I can't play piano. I'd like to play violin, but that's not as easy as it looks. When I use violin bow on guitar, it's not just a gimmick as people think. It's because some great sounds come out. You can employ legitimate bowing techniques and gain new scope and depth. The only drawback is that a guitar has a flat neck, opposed to a violin's curved neck, which is a bit limiting."

Jimmy's career has differed from many musicians in that he has worked backwards. Musicians who start out in bands often end up as session players. More lucrative. Less itinerate. Yet Jimmy began as a top man in a field regarded as a closed shop. How did it happen?

"Everyone likes to play around with different people, and it can be stimulating to do

sessions with other groups. But the kind of work I was doing before proved completely stifling. Never being involved with the artist, it was like being a computer.

"Originally I used to jam with a group at the old Marquee when Cyril Davies was still alive. One day someone asked me if I wanted to play on a rock session – and that's how it started. At that time, only Big Jim Sullivan was around and if there were three sessions, he could only do one, and the others would end up with – well, no names mentioned. Without Jim they were desperate. From then on, work for me escalated.

"I was at art school and had to leave because I couldn't do both. When I first joined a group, the scene had become completely stagnant, and I lost all faith in music and myself. It was about the time The Beatles were beginning to break.

"I really wanted to be a fine art painter. I was sincere in that aim and when I went to college I kept quiet that I played guitar or else they would expect me to play in the lunch hour. A conflict between music and art arose and it came to the point where I had to make a decision."

"I enjoyed playing and the R&B revival restored my faith in music. The Rolling Stones were playing a lot of Muddy Waters numbers and The Beatles were doing things by The Marvelettes and The Shirelles."

Did Jimmy take lessons? "Just picked it up. When I was at school, I had my guitar confiscated every day. They handed it back to me at 4pm. I didn't have any guitar lessons because there was nobody to teach me, and I couldn't get up to London. I couldn't read at all

when I started session work, I had to teach myself on a crash course. There was no individuality involved at all. The arranger said, 'This is what you play,' and that's what I played.

"I got fed up. It began to be a pain in the neck. When The Yardbirds came up – that was it. I was a good friend of Jeff Beck, who had replaced Eric Clapton. I was there when Paul Samwell-Smith had a great row and left the group, so I had to take over on bass. I had never played one before. Then Chris Dreja swapped from rhythm guitar to bass and the idea was for me and Jeff to get a stereo guitar sound.

"With two lead guitars it worked really well. Lots of people have done it since, but I think we must have been the first. When we went over to the States we took them by storm. The funny thing was, The Yardbirds didn't mean anything as a group in England. There was no magic attached to the name. In America it was different.

"The mystique formed because they liked Jeff and knew Eric had been in the group. There was the whole raver thing, as well. English bands liked to loon and Hollywood went wild. Anyway – it was an exciting group.

"The Yardbirds appeared with their cacophony of sound.' That's what an English paper said when they reviewed a show we did at the Royal Albert Hall. But in those days, groups used the Albert Hall PA system and you know what that's like. The guitars were really loud – and bad!

"Eric had always used a little amp and that was always Keith Relf's complaint about Jeff and me: 'Eric used to play through an AC30 and you've got 300 watts each!' He got more and more reticent, but nobody was trying to drown him out. Obviously there was a lot of tension and that's why he made two solo records. I've heard Renaissance are great and I'm pleased Keith is doing well."

Was Jimmy surprised at the news of Traffic reforming? "Not really a surprise, is it? He was always happier with them. I always thought of Jim Capaldi as Steve Winwood's drummer, and Chris Wood can play anything. They are a good combination.

"You know, it wouldn't surprise me if Eric didn't go back to the blues and form a little group. I'd like the Stones to – they went through a lot of changes and came up with 'Jumpin' Jack Flash' and The Beatles went through *Sgt Pepper* and 'Get Back'. They want to go back to their roots."

While many groups burble about "getting it together," and in fact spend most of their time falling about in a fog of indecision, Led Zeppelin work hard at living up to their reputation. Next week they will be satisfying Zeppelin addicts in Europe before returning to their millions of American fans. And for British fans?

"We want to do some free concerts this year. We may be doing one at Glastonbury at the time of the Summer Solstice. But I'm not so sure about Hyde Park. I know in the States they can't have any more because of the Stones thing at Altamont. They won't grant licences, because everybody is frightened. It's a shame, because this type of concert is valuable and legitimate."

OK – so when are Jimmy Page, Robert Plant, John Paul Jones and John Bonham going to split up? "There is no reason to split up. There is nothing inherent musically in Led Zeppelin to harm or destroy it. There is variety, great freedom and no restrictions on the players whatsoever.

"It's good from a head point of view. In our band, everybody respects each other. Everybody plays something to knock each other out. I can't see any split coming. People say to us, 'Now you are established, when are you going to break up?' That's a terrible attitude.

"I heard recently that Crosby, Stills & Nash are going to split up. Fans develop loyalty to a group and that becomes impossible when groups break up so often. We'll carry on and stick together – like The Beatles and Stones." *Chris Welch* •

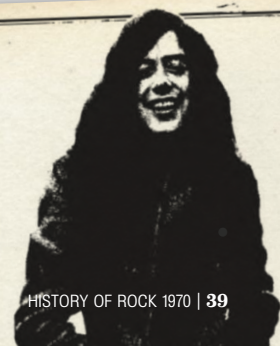
"Everybody plays something to knock each other out"

EVA VON ZEPPELIN, a relative of the German airship designer, was "considering legal action if the British pop group Led Zeppelin play in Copenhagen on Saturday," it was reported last week. "They may be world famous," she said, "but a couple of shrieking monkeys are not going to use a privileged family name without permission."

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Zeppelin, flieg! Thus sang German children marching to school during the Great War. A rough translation goes: Fly Zeppelin.

jimmy page

CHRIS WELCH CONCLUDES
THIS EXCLUSIVE SERIES



1970

JANUARY - MARCH

"I'm getting a microwave cooker to provide hotsteaks at the bar": (l-r) landlord Keith Moon hosts pals Ronnie Lane and Vivian Stanshall, along with MM writer Chris Welch, at the Crown & Cushion in Chipping Norton, Oxfordshire, June 1970



“What ho!”

KEITH MOON and VIV STANSALL have one of rock's most notorious friendships. Apart, over long lunches, they talk ugly choristers, wigs, the hotel game, suicidal thoughts, even music. Together, anything can happen. “I rescued him from the gutter,” Viv explains. “Now we are chums.”

— MELODY MAKER FEBRUARY 21 —

A TELEPHONE SHRILLED dramatically on my desk. As I clutched my skull to prevent the top blowing off, a voice croaked in my ear, “Hi, Vivian Stanshall here. What happened yesterday?”

It was a long story. Putting together the pieces with the aid of a tattered notebook drenched in alcohol, it transpired that Mr Stanshall had called at the *MM* office for coffee and chat about his first solo venture—the Sean Head Showband and the Big Grunt. Viv appeared in gay, talkative mood, a pair of octagonal glasses and a neatly shaven head which he rubbed from time to time to keep the circulation lively. Thoughts of coffee were dismissed as we adjourned to the Red Lion alehouse, Fleet Street.

He procured a plate of cold potatoes and a glass of vodka, both of which repelled me to the point of nausea. But Viv was obviously excited about “Labio-Dental-Fricative”, his first solo single, billed as the Sean Head Showband and featuring Eric Clapton on guitar. This will not be a permanent band, however, and the replacement for the Bonzo Dog Band will be the Big Grunt, which »

BARRE WENTZELL

Viv is in the process of organising. “The Grunt will be the next band, but I want to make solo singles as well with different musicians under various silly names. The next single will be a ballad and I’d like to use lots of really ugly choristers.”

Did Viv shave his hair to tie in with Sean Head? “No, I’m not that dedicated. It would be like forming The Leg-Off Band and having a leg amputated. Improve your body – have a leg off!”

Viv seemed to release the single in super-quick time after the Bonzo split, I observed, toying with a cold damp sausage. He replied in slow measured tones, “We greased the corridors. It made everything go so much quicker. Also – everybody on the session was bullet-shaped.”

How did he manage to obtain the services of our Eric for the session? “Shanghaied him. I can’t remember how it came about. Oh, I sent him some lyrics which he liked, so he came over. We recorded the number at about three in the morning.

“The Big Grunt is coming along nicely. We intend to concentrate on the physical fitness aspect and we will have a bit of road training before we actually get on the road. We discussed going to a Turkish bath where some of the boys could sport with each other. Dennis Cowan and I have been planning to do some weight lifting – a bit of pushing and pulling.

“The band will be getting it together in the country – under canvas. We are just waiting for the Fat Boy to fly in from Sweden. He is Bubs White, on guitar, and he used to play with The Committee.” Will the band have a regular drummer as well? “Well, Roger Spear is making a robot to lay it down, but we are trying out a few boys.”

More drinks were ordered, but the lights were being switched off and the barman began pointedly emptying ash trays and removing the sea of bottles from our table. “Aren’t you Viv Stanshall of the Bonzos?” asked the barman curiously. “What are you doing these days?”

“I’m selling wigs.”

“No, really...”

“No, seriously,” said Viv and opening his satchel produced what looked like a large blonde tea cosy. “Only 5s 11d and absolutely undetectable. Now to don London’s most unconvincing wig...” He put the tea cosy on his head at a rakish angle and winked.

Outside the pub we hailed a cab and forgetting nonsense about coffee sped post-haste to an afternoon drinking club not far from Tin Pan Alley.

“I’m very excited about the new band,” he continued, ordering the first of an endless stream of large Scotches. “We won’t scrap all our old material, like the Brain Opera. That might well be recorded in the future. The Big Grunt should be more musical than the Bonzos and have more character. The gags will be in a more rhythmic sequence and tie in with the music. We haven’t started recording yet because we have been waiting for Bubs to be catapulted in.

“I want things to be more entertaining. For example, I don’t think you can make serious singles. They should be for enjoyment and to make radio fun listening. The single doesn’t really lend itself to a beautiful production in stereo.”

“Borneo Fred Munt, our old roadie, will be in the Grunt to contribute material. Fred wrote about 100 songs while he was with the Bonzos all about aggro in cages on the M1, situations with jobsworths and equipment problems. They are all roadie songs and they are so good we are going to do an album of them called *Keep On Trucking* with Fred singing and playing saxophone. It’s good to give the lads a chance, said he, slapping his wellingtons and riding off into the sunset.”

Viv lurched towards the jukebox and managed to insert a coin. A particularly unpleasant Black & White Minstrel song came blaring through the speakers.

“Most embarrassing, I didn’t put that one on. Suddenly my back runs cold with sweat. Good heavens, the record is speeding up and getting louder. Some kind of foam is coming out of the machine! I’ll put a Dean Martin on to get rid of it.”



March 26, 1970: Keith Moon and The Who perform “The Seeker” on *Top Of The Pops*

We downed another large Scotch and stared vacantly at the floor. “Saw Jimmy Page the other week,” I began weakly. “He’s been reading Aleister Crowley. He asked me to give you a message. Come to Pangbourne Abbey where the law is enforced.”

Viv lifted his lolling head and peered blearily. “Tell Jimmy the cream of the owl will be poured on the bishop’s trouser leg. Would you mind getting me another drink, dear boy?”

Tottering back from the bar, I found the following inscribed in my notebook:

“During this interview ‘Welchy’ has made constant references to leather and on several occasions tried to put his raincoat over my knees. Naturally I have been repelling him, but what can I do? But I must stop... he’s coming back.”

When will Grunt start operations? “The new band will work for limited periods. I want to pace it so when we got out for a few months at a time there will be totally different stuff.

“You have no idea how refreshing it is to be able to sit at home and read for a bit, or watch telly. I think the first gig will be at Aston University on March 25. In the meantime I have been making wardrobes and shelves and getting back to normal. Reading back some of the stuff I wrote last year, a lot of it seems completely incomprehensible. The whole group scene makes you insular and cut off from normal things. That’s why lyrics become so obscure and why people in groups begin to lose their real friends.

“I am going through a complete purgatorial metamorphosis. I go through periods of terrific elation and work like stink, and then I feel deep depression and want to go to the lavatory and screw a hook in the ceiling.”

It was time for another round. On my return from the bar bearing large Scotches, once again there was evidence of tampering with my notes: “Well just before I was so rudely interrupted I was going to say that while he plies me with drinks I still have enough moral fibre to err... oh lumme!”

It was by now 5.10pm and the boozers were open. Viv peered through his glasses. “Do you fancy going to the scrumpy bar, Waterloo?” A thought struck him and the tea cosy slipped over his brow: “Got to go to the BBC. Got an interview with Anne Nightingale of the *Daily Sketch*.”

Somehow the stairs were navigated to street level and a cab hailed between procuring bags of chestnuts and shouting strange cries at Barry Ryan, who fled at our approach. At Broadcasting House we were confronted by the amazing sight of two 1920 London General Omnibuses in immaculate trim about to depart for the Arlo Guthrie reception. To my horror, Stanshall, now speechless, began to mount the stairs and sat upon the top deck, peering disdainfully around.

“Ere, what’s that bloke doing?” demanded the conductor testily. “It’s OK, he’s a famous artist,” I explained. “Oi, Viv – come down!”

Miss Nightingale blanched at the somewhat terrifying sight of the silent skinhead and we hastily wheeled him to the Quality Inn, where old ladies



sat drinking tea and Hungarian waiters scurried at their duties. "Would you like your coffee black or white, sir?"

"Greyish brown. Ha – you artist!" exclaimed Viv, as the startled waiter juggled with his pots. Later we escorted our chum to a cab and directed the driver to take Viv to his East Finchley home.

"Did you get home alright?" I asked Viv the next morning.

"No – the swine took me to Heathrow Airport."

Chris Welch

— NME JUNE 13 —

WHEN KEITH MOON WALKS – perhaps "bounds" is more accurate – into a room you almost expect to hear Little Richard's "a-wop-bop-a-loo-bob-a-wop-bam-boom" war crying out from above. Keith has that sort of effect on people. He generates enthusiasm and radiates happiness even when he's being serious, which, these days, is more frequently than before.

He's been through a lot lately with a fatal accident and a couple of court appearances, but somehow all the tension and fatigue hasn't visibly affected him. He still manages his maniacal laugh every so

often and is unguardedly outspoken as ever. Keith and I met for a drink a few days ago and he was pleased that I'd liked The Who's new "live" album, which must be about the most exciting rock album of its kind ever made. It wasn't by any stretch of the imagination a rush job.

"Pete's had it on his mind for years but we've never had a real chance to do it before," Keith explained, settling himself with his customary large brandy and ginger. "We got the mics and sound balance and things sorted out during the American tour, moving mics backwards a bit and forward and so on until the recordings sounded OK.

"Bob Pridden [a Who roadie] is getting a bit old now, so we had to give him a desk job – we sat him at the control panel on stage and left him to get on with the balance. We did two recordings here, one in Hull and one in Leeds. The Hull one was quite good but the Leeds one was really good. Bob worked well that night, bless him!"

Keith is satisfied with the way the album has turned out but is now working with Roger, Pete and John on yet another. It won't be out for a few months, though. "We're recording at Pete's and it's about half done," Keith revealed.

"It's great working there; we can start at lunch time and have a track finished by about five. If we record every day for a month or two we'll have enough albums for the next 30 years! I always said we'd finish up coming on stage in our wheelchairs. By that time John'll be about 20 stone and he'll have to be hauled on stage like a piece of equipment. His arms will be all puffed up, with two mandibles on the end that will clamp his guitar. Roger's hair will be down to his feet like a curtain and it'll be shaped like the curtain at West Ham Odeon; it'll go up to reveal an old cracked face."

It doesn't take Keith long to lapse into his world of humour, as you see. But he did, on a serious note, add that the next album will be finished off when The Who return from their American tour sometime in July and it will be out around September.

"It takes so long to do an album with tours," he went on. "You spend two weeks preparing for America, a month there, and then it takes a month to get over it when you get back. Then there are shows to do and you never get round to recording. This is what happened before... now we're going to do more albums."

A few years ago, Keith was very into all things American and was often compared to a comic-strip character. His opinion of the land of milk and mace has changed somewhat. He certainly doesn't believe any more that American bands are far superior to British groups.

"Too many of them are protesting and bringing people down," he commented. "To me, the theatre is an escape, you don't go to be made miserable, you go to escape from reality."

"Abbie Hoffman jumped on the stage at Woodstock and started protesting and the kids didn't cheer until Pete whacked him with his guitar. If he wants to preach, let him do it on a soap box – not on our stage."

The Who's public relations man arrived with a large female alsatian called Sheba in tow. This was the signal for a verbal free-for-all bringing in all our friends in the business and frightening the life out of the bar staff who, being new, hadn't experience a Moon and Green laugh-in before.

When a little bit of calm settled again, I asked Keith if he thought drummers were playing a more important role in groups than before.

"I think they are," he agreed. "In the jazz days, people like Gene Krupa and Buddy Rich would have their parts written down and all the arrangements done. Later on, the rock'n'roll drummers didn't really have to use their imagination, they just played, but groups nowadays are a unit."

"We're four individuals who all fit into the group on a level – say a sea level. You have to find your place and settle on that level. The Beatles have gone right through and hit rock bottom: they're on the sea bed. I don't think they ever had a real image, not lately anyway. Not since they were loveable fluffy moptops with those collars, and that was Brian Epstein's idea anyway."

It's plainly obvious that The Who rely a lot on excitement for their appeal and Keith had something to say about how that is being dealt

with right now. "It's taken us five years to get things really sorted out," he admitted. "We realised that where I'd be waving my arms about [a short demonstration sent three people scuttling to the wall for safety], I could play better on the drums. What we'll be giving is quality not quantity, though the act won't really be any shorter."

"We won't work to a set pattern; we play it by ear. After America you'll notice a lot of difference in the act. We'll do the odd number from *Tommy* like 'Pinball Wizard' and 'I'm Free', but that's all, and slot in some of the numbers we do now and some new ones."

After telling me that The Who were rehearsing all week from 1.30pm, Keith looked at his watch

and discovered it was already a quarter to two.

"Oh, that's alright, it'll only take five minutes to get there," he said with relief. "Where are you rehearsing, round the corner?" I asked.

"No, Wandsworth!"

Good old Moon, he'll never change that much.

Before he left, Keith told me one of his customary tales, this time involving the phantom nude and the Scottish police. Be warned.

"I bought a pair of inflatable legs and stuck stockings and a suspender belt on them, and then I hid on the floor in the back of the Bentley and put the legs out of the window," he gleamed. "I was yelling, 'Stop it', 'Let me go', 'Rape' through the car's PA and outside a station a policewoman saw it and wrote the number down and phoned the police. All forces were

alerted and they followed us to Scotland, where we were going for a Small Faces tour.

"When we got to the hotel, I put the legs in the bath and draped a sheet over it. The police came in and I said, 'It's in there', and this copper went in and nearly passed out and had to be held up by his mate. One of them pulled a leg and »

"I always said we'd end up coming on stage in our wheelchairs"

WHO REHEARSED LIVE ALBUM DURING AMERICAN TOUR

WHEN Keith Moon walks — perhaps "bounds" is more accurate — into a room you almost expect to hear Little Richard's "a-wop-bop-a-lup-bob-a-wop-bam-boom" war crying out from above. Keith has that sort of effect on people. He generates enthusiasm and radiates happiness even when he's being serious which, these days, is more frequently than before.

KEITH MOON, a little more serious these days, talks to RICHARD GREEN



it came away in his hand. By this time The Faces had arrived and they were falling about all over the floor. The police just got embarrassed, told me off and left!”

Well, if the law don't know by now to forget everything when Moon's about they've only got themselves to blame! *Richard Green*

— MELODY MAKER SEPTEMBER 19 —

KEITH MOON AND VIV STANSHALL caused uproar when they visited a London hospital recently. They went to call upon Who publicist Brian Somerville, recovering from an operation on four fractures of his leg received after falling from a horse in Hyde Park.

They arrived late and were escorted off the premises by a jobsworth. Undaunted, our heroes slipped back into the casualty ward. Keith removed his shoes and socks, rolled up a trouser leg, and sat in a wheelchair, to be pushed around the wards by Stanshall clad in full surgeon's drag.

Says Somerville: “They came into my ward and caused uproar – complete hysterics among all the patients. They carried out fake operations, then left – undetected.” It was later discovered all patients have increased temperature, blood and pulse rates.

— MELODY MAKER OCTOBER 10 —

ACROSS EACH MEMBER OF A GROUP has to bear is the threat of being refused service in a pub. Keith Moon has taken the obvious step to combat this deterioration in service in the inns of old England. He has bought his own pub – and ALL are welcome. In fact, he has become one third of a dedicated partnership, who have taken the lease on a superb hotel, parts of which date back to the 12th century, in the picturesque town of Chipping Norton, Oxfordshire.

It might seem a highly dangerous proposition for the explosive Mr Moon to become a landlord. “He'll drink away the profits, that young gentleman will, mark my words,” was the cry in the Barrow & Turnip the day the news came out. “There'll be comings and goings, and a decent man won't be able to hold a pint of bitter in peace.” One can easily imagine the grumbling among locals.

But in fact, there has been no grumbling, only a four-fold increase in takings. And the atmosphere at the Crown & Cushion is understandably a jolly one. It was my pleasure to spend a convivial Sunday evening at the Moon hostelry, and I must pronounce it a splendid watering-hole and the host a capital fellow.

In the company of *MM*'s photographer Barrie Wentzell, we drove by all-British Rover at a steady 110mph through the autumnal countryside. On arrival we met Keith's partners Ron and Yvonne Mears and Tony Hales-Tooke, the manager. Any half-formed suspicions that the Crown & Cushion might prove a hotbed of riotous debauch along the lines of certain London discotheques were instantly extinguished. We were ushered into a lounge where white-haired ladies drank tea in perfect safety and a gentleman in a green kilt watched Malcolm Muggeridge talking about Jews and Arabs in colour, without any overt sign of vulgar partnership.

“Keith is out riding just now,” said Yvonne, ordering us tea. At 7pm the bar opened and before we had time to snort a lager and white wine, Keith appeared in our midst, in company with Vivian Stanshall and Ronald Lane, the well-known musicians.

“What-ho,” said Keith. “We've just been for a spot of punting.” Apparently it had been too late to hire horses, but it was not too late to imbibe ale and vast quantities were consumed, not to mention brandy, and champagne.

Keith looked in fine shape, and not much different from the white tee-shirted tornado who first changed the rock world's concept of drumming back at the birth of The Who.

Keith is fairly notorious as a looner and practical joker. Stories of his exploits, particularly in America, are legion. And his violence as a percussionist is legendary.

But there is another Keith Moon, who likes to enjoy life and help others enjoy themselves. And he does this with a surprising mixture of rather old-fashioned good manners and genuine geniality.

And his hotel venture is deadly serious. “I've spent most of my life in hotels, and I know the difference between a good one and a bad one.” Organising a brief tour round the outhouses and grounds, he explained how he moved into the bed, steaks and vino belt.

“Part of the hotel dates back to the 12th century. There are some of the original beams. We are near to Stratford-On-Avon and Oxford, so we get plenty of tourists, especially Americans “doing” the Cotswolds.

“My partners Ron and Yvonne were looking for a hotel and we had a bit of a session one day, and I thought I'd like to go in with them. It's important the way we run the hotel. So many hotels today make the guests feel as if they are imposing by their presence. I like people – and we want everybody who comes to feel as if they know us. We have instigated quite a few changes here. I'm really enjoying it, although as you know I'm not really a one for socialising.”

Was this some indication that Keith might be retiring?

“Certainly not. I'm not going to hide myself away in seclusion. That's not my style.”

Was there any upset in the town at the new regime?

“No – quite the opposite. I think they are quite relieved, because we are taking an interest in them and the hotel and we want to make it successful.”

In the background chat in the bar, I could hear an elderly couple discussing the pop scene, perhaps unaware of their host's full-time occupation. “...and he came from a good background, I can't understand what happens to them. That awful Mick Jagger – isn't the repulsive! Repulsive!”

“We've kept most of the original staff,” Keith was saying. “We think of ideas and they say whether we can do them or not. I'm getting a microwave cooker to provide hot steaks at the bar. We're also running a folk club at the back, and we'd like your folk chap to come down.”

He proudly pointed out the gardens, which produce their own fresh vegetables, the immaculate kitchens and wine cellars, new bedrooms and the candle-lit restaurant, all grouped Italian style around a central courtyard. While we waited for supper, Keith chatted at the bar a little about his drumming role with The Who and their forthcoming tour.

Tony Williams, one of the world's greatest jazz drummers, told me last week that his favourite English drummer was Keith. “A drummer that really impresses me is Keith Moon with The Who,” he said. “He has a very fluid style and he really makes that band.”

“I never did worry much about a style when I started,” explained Keith. “All I wanted to do was play music the way I felt it should be played. And as it happened the instrument I felt best on was the drums. I didn't spend a lot of time studying drums in an attic with a bottle of cheap red wine. I could express myself best by playing the drums.

“That's what drumming is to me – a complete outlet. I just go on stage and when the curtain comes up – zonk. Playing hard isn't an ordeal for me. I don't think of it as a marathon.

“Five years ago, The Who was like a nucleus of basic energy. We plumbed each other's depths, and learned how to get it right. Now what will we be doing on the tour? Do you know – I really can't remember, old chap. To be quite honest, the whole thing was booked while we were away, so I don't even know where we are playing or when. But the machinery has been set in operation.

“We'll be taking our spotlights with us, which we used on the Isle Of Wight. So it's all in hand. We're going to have three days of rehearsals. I expect the programme will be much the same as usual. We may feature a spot of euthanasia – and present the mercy killing of *Tommy*.” *Chris Welch* •

“They came
into my ward
in hospital
and caused
uproar”



"A dreadful bore"

MM DEC 19 Viv Stanshall takes the *Maker* "Reaction" questionnaire.

Power cuts Bloody outrage. Who are they hurting? I don't know what they want, but whatever it is I will give it to them. I spend half my time massaging my turtles and the other half putting candles underneath my fish tanks. But like the rubbish thing the other week, I rather enjoy being blacked out. It's rather jolly and gives you a sense of reality.

Bonzos A good try. We were all a bit surprised that *Doughnut In Granny's Greenhouse* was so utterly ignored. The musical aspect was not really up to scratch, and we gradually lost direction. It was good to outrage people for so long and to make a profession out of being rude and putting your tongue out at people. I can't think of a better way of spending five years. It was a good laugh with my chums. A unique and unforgettable experience.

Keith Moon I rescued him from the gutter. I was going down Wardour Street one evening for a coffee when I saw this dreadful man calling to me from the gutter. I threw my overcoat over him and gave him 2s for a cup of tea. We became engaged in conversation and I took him to a sauna bath to clean him up. I was surprised to see a young prince beneath the dirt when I wiped him down with a man-sized tissue, and he promised to repay me some day. Now we are chums.

Rupert Bear I enjoy Rupert Bear because he is so innocent. I enjoy the cleanliness of it and the hygiene. When Rupert and his daddy get off a train I am always astonished to see that they are bears and everyone else is a person.

Being interviewed by the MM Very interesting, because I don't suppose I would ask myself the same questions. Sometimes it's a dreadful bore. I am put on a spot like this by having to give specific answers.

Drugs I think any kind of experience is valid provided one understands what you are putting yourself through. I am most interested to see how I would react under any kind of situation, because life is usually very boring. If it gives a greater insight into things, then the use of drugs is a good thing, but to become

"If it gives a greater insight into things, then the use of drugs is a good thing"



Beatles A dreadful nuisance. It always appears that they have hinted about something you are about to do yourself. They make magic. Many of their songs will become classics, with Shirley Bassey and Matt Monro singing them in 20 years' time. They never seem to have pimples.

Nazi uniforms Jolly smart. I think they have a similar effect to green peppers. Keith and I hired them from a theatrical shop just for a laugh. The idea was to confront the uniforms of the Speakeasy with another uniform. Both uniforms are really ridiculous.

Politics Everything is politics. I am not really interested in the green-grocery of politics. Which is the preferable monster? I don't

addicted is not. I think it ought to remain illegal because I like the ceremony attached to taking drugs. It would be dreadful to buy joints in a jolly pack with washing powder names.

Radio One It is all part of a gigantic plan to subdue us. I think it is part of a new society where we all have to listen to certain noises. Does anybody really listen to it? Is it there genuinely to entertain?

entertaining as real people. I have seen his show four or five times and it is getting better. He will win in the end.

Pope's attempted assassination

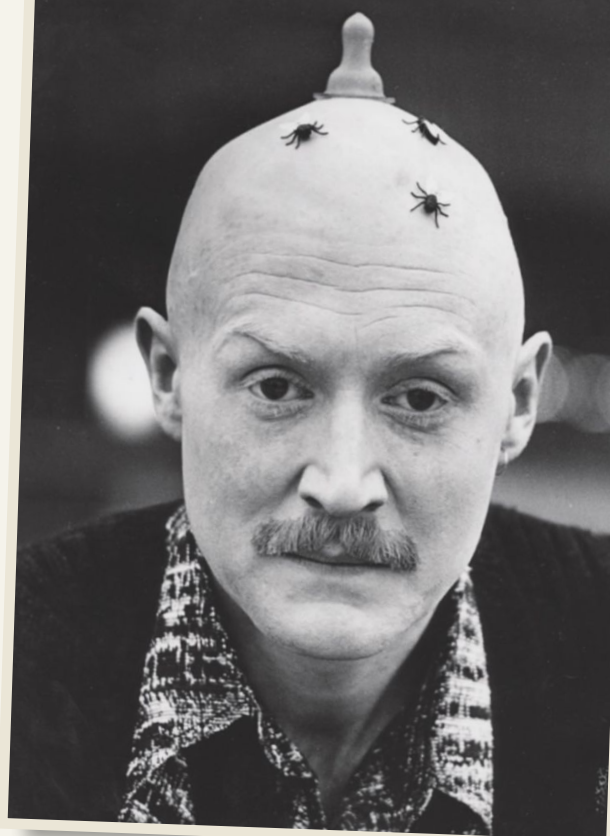
I thought it was very romantic. I loved it when they asked the guy why he didn't use a gun and he said he couldn't afford one. The Pope is responsible for a lot of misery in the world but I don't think the answer is to kill him. If you did away with the Pope there would be no *Private Eye*.

TV commercials In the main, a darn sight more interesting than the programmes.

Hair I have had it outrageously long since I was about 16. It was good to outrage people with it. I had it chopped off because I was doing a lot of fibreglass work and it was a nuisance, I was sticking to the glue.

Looning It's like inflation. I can't intellectualise on it. Everything is so dull and predictable that it's interesting to see how you would react if someone suddenly vomited on you. I don't like the expression looning. I hope someone thinks of an alternative.

America I like it. We are a bit administered over here. Things are happening much faster over there, so it seems. I have never been to a place where there were so many people being so rude to me.



think I have any politics. I have so many opinions about things that it is like having no opinion. It's the same thing. The Don't Know Party wins hands down.

Pop festivals

Good value. We are a nation of watchers, and pop festivals can be joined in. Groups should turn their speakers round and invite everybody to be one of the band. One night at the Marquee we gave out 300 whistles.

Monty Python's Flying Circus

Derivative. I am glad it is receiving acclaim.

Roger Spear He is in the process of proving what he has always said and that is that machines can be just as

Page 28—MELODY MAKER, December 19, 1970

REACTION

This week: Viv Stanshall

POWER CUTS: Bloody outrage. Who are they hurting? I don't know what they want but whatever it is

was surprised to see a young prince beneath the dirt when I wiped him down with a man-sized tissue, and he promised to repay me some day. Now we are chums.

about something you are about to do yourself. They make magic. Many of their songs will become classics with Shirley Bassey and Matt Monro singing them in 20 years' time. They never seem to have pimples.



“Nobody knows me”

NICO is a woman alone. On a visit to London, she explains her relationship with music (“I wanted to be an opera singer”) and with Andy Warhol (“He could never get me to take my clothes off”). Later, **JOHN CALE** explores her mystique, and their mutual roots in The Velvet Underground.

— MELODY MAKER MARCH 21 —

THE SLEEVE OF The Velvet Underground’s first album was dead right when it read “Nico: chanteuse”. Not just “singer”, because Nico is more than that, and the word “chanteuse” contains just the right registrations of the European tradition of chanson. For me, she is a logical extension of Marlene Dietrich singing “Falling In Love Again” in the Blue Angel bar; and yet, while her singing has that feeling of age and tradition behind it, it is also beyond tomorrow, way ahead of all those other lady singers who are still into “interpretation”.

Those who have her Elektra album *The Marble Index* will already know what I’m saying. The LP is a journey through a landscape not unlike Berlin, where she lived as a child: desolate and wind-blown, scarred yet futuristic.

She is in London just now, attempting to make another LP, but has met only disillusionment and loneliness. Her friends from the old days – Keith Richards and Anita Pallenberg, Paul McCartney and Linda Eastman – were too busy with their new lives to help her, and record company executives were uniformly uncooperative. She played one gig, an implosion night at the Roundhouse, but when I asked her if she had been invited to »

GETTY



"I wanted to be an
opera singer since
I was a little girl":
Nico on stage in 1970

do any more she replied, in the deep Wagnerian accent, “No, who should ask me? I have a reputation for not turning up to sing. It’s something I want very badly to get rid of.”

But to get back to the beginning, a brief history: Nico, born of a Polish mother and a father who died in the concentration camps, was a top Parisian cover girl before she met the Stones.

About four years ago Brian Jones took her to Andy Warhol’s Factory in New York, and she joined The Velvet Underground, the group that was part of Warhol’s Exploding Plastic Inevitable – the pioneering multi-media troupe which used dancers plus the first-ever light show.

With them she sang at the Dom in New York, cut an album for Verve, travelled across the States to Los Angeles in a bus (she and Sterling Morrison took turns driving), and played the Fillmore West to the accompaniment of some bad scenes with Bill Graham. After about a year she left the group to sing on her own, starting at the Balloon Farm (upstairs from the Dom). Her accompanists changed every week, but the main ones were Lou Reed and John Cale from the Velvet and Jackson Browne, a young guitarist and singer from Orange County.

The upshot was that three of Browne’s songs were on her first, badly produced album (for Verve), alongside Bob Dylan’s “I’ll Keep It With Mine”, which legend says the master wrote for Nico, but of which she simply declares, “I don’t know about that. He just gave it to me.”

That album, *Chelsea Girl*, was titled after a Warhol movie in which she appeared. She made another one with him, which he has never shown – “Maybe it wasn’t dirty enough for old New York. He could never get me to take my clothes off.”

There followed a long silence, broken a year ago by the appearance of *The Marble Index*, which is one of those records which just might, in 10 or 20 years’ time, be regarded as some sort of milestone.

Since then she’s spent a lot of time in Italy, and has made part of a film called *La Cicatrice Intérieure* with the French director Philippe Garelle – “He’s really one of the best movie-makers. He’s directed five films, but he’s never let them be released. This new one is very important to me. It’s so powerful. We did part of it in the American desert and part of it in the Egyptian desert... I don’t know when we’ll finish it. It doesn’t matter; there’s no hurry because it’s a very timeless thing.”

But the most vital thing at the moment is to make a record, a task which amazingly defeated her in

London. She accompanies herself on a very small Indian harmonium, and has 15 or 20 songs of her own that she wants to record. She started composing a couple of years ago, and bought the harmonium at just about the same time.

She had no lessons (“Just singing lessons – I wanted to be an opera singer since I was a very little girl”) and plays the instrument in a uniquely delicate style, based on modes rather than chords.

“I don’t want to play in any more clubs,” she says. “I’d like to do concerts, and maybe colleges would be good. But I don’t have a manager, and nobody

knows me here. In New York all the young people know me... I have a lot of friends... but I hate New York. Maybe I should get a manager. I wouldn’t mind all the hassling if somebody else could go through it for me.”

She was planning to fly to New York later the day that I saw her, possibly to take up the option on her Elektra contract. But a couple of hours after we’d parted she rang to say that she’d changed her mind. “I can’t stand the thought of going to New York, so I’m flying to Ibiza. It’s my favourite place, and I think I’ll die there.”

So perhaps those 15 beautiful songs will never be heard. But somehow I think there’s hope yet, even if London isn’t ready for it. *Richard Williams*

“I can’t stand the thought of going to New York, so I’m flying to Ibiza”

— MELODY MAKER JULY 25 —

THE VELVET UNDERGROUND ARE ALMOST a myth to their fans. Up until now they have been a minority-appeal band, but those who have discovered them are invariably completely hung up on the quartet’s bizarre originality. John Cale was the Welsh voice who intoned Lou Reed’s story of Marsha Bronson and Waldo Jeffers on “The Gift”, and also the fingers behind the nerve-grating electric viola on “Venus In Furs”.

He left the band after its second album, and is currently in London to produce the final stages of Nico’s new album for Joe Boyd, which was begun a couple of months ago in New York. “Nico’s so powerful... very Germanic, very European,” he told me. “I’m going to use a string orchestra on some tracks, and possibly a rock band on one cut.

I’m making her sing without her harmonium.”

John produced Nico’s last LP, the mind-shattering *Marble Index*, which he told me was recorded in two days – one for the vocals and harmonium, and one for the backings, which John overdubbed himself. One song left off that record, he says, sounded just like Jerry Lee Lewis.

More importantly for Cale’s own point of view is the recent release in America of his own Columbia album, *Vintage Violence*, an extraordinary compilation which, typically, is not at all what you’d expect. John says that some of the songs are “British” and some are “American” in tone, and certainly the most exciting is the brilliantly arranged “Big White Cloud”.

Welsh by birth, upbringing, and accent, John spent three years in London, notably at Goldsmiths College, before the famous American composer Aaron Copeland got him a summer scholarship to America’s Tanglewood music school through Leonard Bernstein.

Difficult, desolate

MM MARCH 28 Nico’s capital concert.

“I THOUGHT THIS was a rock and roll place,” said Nico, smiling between numbers at the Roundhouse last Sunday. She was right, but she contrived to transcend barriers of taste and finally left the stage to warm applause.

Hers is difficult music. It’s tonal range circumscribed by the sound of the harmonium she played and her intensely personal, desolate delivery. The emotional range of these interior monologues is, however, unlimited, and among the most memorable of the songs were “My Empty Pages”, “No-one Is There” and a new song, “In Her Native German”.

Richard Williams





Nico and Sterling Morrison onstage with The Velvet Underground at the New York Society For Clinical Psychiatry annual dinner, Delmonico Hotel, New York, January 13, 1966

"I was thrown out of Goldsmiths at just the right time to take the scholarship," he says. "That was in 1963, and I had two days of working and studying with La Monte Young in The Dream Syndicate. That was very avant-garde music – we were holding chords for two hours at a time, and it was based on a system of intonation. We had electric violin and viola and two voices, and it was very loud and solid and hard."

It was then that he met Lou Reed, who was under contract to a music-

publishing company as a songwriter. Lou played John some songs that the company wouldn't use, and among them were the famous "Heroin" and "Venus In Furs" from the first Velvets album, which Lou had written when 15 years old in high school at Syracuse, New York.

Sterling Morrison was a guitarist friend of Reed's, so the three of them got together and eventually added Maureen Tucker on drums. She had been a computer operator. The rest of the story – the meeting with Andy Warhol, gigs at the Dom in Greenwich Village, the abortive West Coast tour, and Nico – is too well known to need repeating in detail, but for the record John says that the name of the band came from an American paperback.

John became a little wary when I asked him about the group's attitude as reflected in some of its more horrific material, and commented, "I do care that people believe the songs represented our attitudes. The main attitude was fear, and people believed that because we wrote and performed a song like 'Heroin' it meant that we condoned the drug thing. In fact it's about someone who doesn't like himself, and heroin is the vehicle through which Lou expressed this."

"Lou is a very gifted writer – he must be to have written those things when he was 15. 'The Gift' was my idea, because I'd

read his story and I thought it would sound good to back it with a separate instrumental piece called 'Booker T'."

Eventually John left the group, at about the same time that Nico split, and they added Doug Yule instead. He signed with Columbia and started to work in the studios with a group called Grinder's Switch, who he says sound like The Band. A friend of his had put the band together, and he spent three months working on songs with them before he left because

"I wasn't really interested in The Band's style of music."

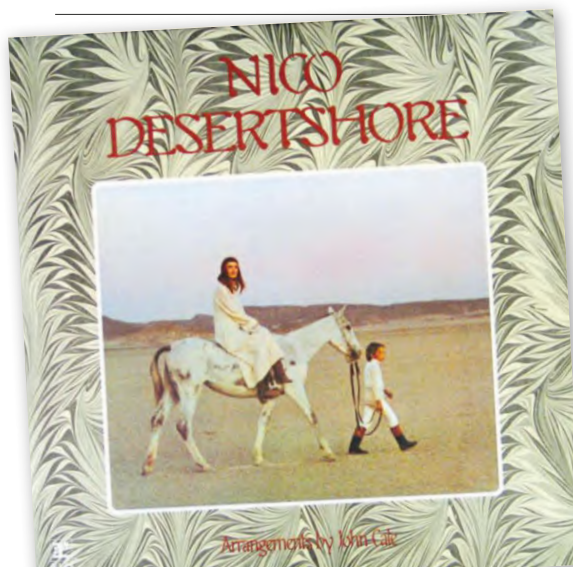
Apart from his own record, John has also been working on Terry Riley's new Columbia album, *Church Of Anthrax*, on which Riley plays organ and piano.

"Rock 'n' roll has had a stunning effect on modern classical music," he says. "Those guys have got a lot to learn, and Stockhausen's electronic things didn't affect rock a bit, apart from maybe the four singles Jim Guercio did with The Buckingham. And Guercio had a classical training. But all the exciting things are in rock 'n' roll."

John has an unusual day job at Columbia now, remixing all the company's best albums for quadraphonic stereo, which is like stereo but with four speakers, one in each corner of the room. His plans for himself include the writing and recording of a symphonic work, on a grand scale, and he says that he is currently interested in the lavish Spector style.

"It almost came off with The Velvet Underground," he says, "and it's hovering around right now. It may have something to do with *The Marble Index* kind of overdubbing techniques. But basically I'm having a good time writing songs." Richard Williams •

"I do care that people believe the songs represented our attitudes"



1970

JANUARY - MARCH



Black Sabbath in 1970:
(l-r) Geezer Butler, Bill
Ward, Ozzy Osbourne
and Tony Iommi

“A promoter sent return tickets for us, and a one-way for a sacrificial victim”

— MELODY MAKER MARCH 14 —

BLACK SABBATH, FOUR unknown rock musicians from Birmingham, have emerged from obscurity with what is probably the first true underground success since the days of Pink Floyd and UFO. Without mass media exposure, the Birmingham band now find themselves with a best-selling first album, sold on the strength of their hard-rock sound, which has built them a fanatical following in isolated areas. As Black Sabbath, the group have worked steadily both in Britain and on the Continent, building up an increasing following wherever they appear. At Birmingham's Henry's Blues House recently, they broke Jethro Tull's attendance record, which had lasted for over a year. It's in Birmingham that the group are the biggest draw. Their reputation has spread from there through their live appearances and a solitary *Top Gear* session they did before Christmas and the release of their *Vertigo* album, still making progress in the chart.

The album is an accurate reflection of their music, hard, driving and blues-based, with lyrics that have been influenced by black magic, »

BLACK SABBATH are a great new heavy blues band, popular with John Peel. Trouble is, everyone thinks they dabble in the occult. “People seem to expect something out of the ordinary when we appear.”

GETTY

a subject they have become interested in since changing their name. Their environment, they believe, is reflected in their music.

"Aston is a bit of a tough area in Birmingham and a lot of our music could really be put together in this way. The black magic thing came about when we changed our name. We just looked into it a little bit out of interest; Geezer is the most interested in it. We were playing the blues thing and just became interested in the supernatural through changing the name."

The group have been together in various forms for the past 18 months, but at one time they lost lead guitarist and flute player Tony Iommi, who left to join Jethro Tull when Mick Abrahams left to form Blodwyn Pig. "Tony was with Jethro for about a week and he did the Rolling Stones' *Rock And Roll [Circus]* show but he came back to the nest, I'm glad to say," said Ward.

Iommi's return strengthened the group's writing talent. They all share in the writing of their material that forms the basis of their act, which is all original apart from two numbers.

Black Sabbath spent six months of last year on the Continent, they were rebooked at Hamburg's famous Star Club five times during the year, and have built up a big following in Germany. With their first album still selling tremendously well and moving into the higher reaches of the chart, the group have now started on their second album, which should consolidate their surprising first success, watched closely by the group.

"It sold over 500 copies on Monday. We've been checking the sales figures and watching the album charts. It was No 5 on the underground chart." In Black Sabbath's case "underground" is probably used in its right context. Their success has been built on their own un-hyped appeal. *Royston Eldridge*

— NME APRIL 4 —

A NUMBER OF POP groups seem to have decided that it's the in-thing these days to meddle in black magic and present their version of some of its rites on stage. So when I came across a group called Black Sabbath I naturally thought this was another touch of the things that go bump in the night. Not so. Despite the group's name, members Ozzy Osbourne, Geezer Butler, Tony Iommi and Bill Ward want nothing to do with the spooks – at least, in their music.

Lead guitarist Tony told me: "Everybody thinks we're a black magic group, but we just picked the name because we like it. I agree some of the numbers on the LP are about supernatural things, but that's as far as it goes. We don't make a habit of playing numbers like that. I think it was because we're interested in the supernatural as people but not as musicians. The next album will feature more instrumental work."

Black Sabbath have been together since the end of 1967, just after Tony left Jethro Tull. The other three were members of various groups and they all came together to play what they felt.

"I was with Jethro Tull for a few weeks," said Tony. "Musically they're really good, but where we treat the music as a personal thing, they treat it as a job. We all mix together, they don't. Ian is very to himself, he doesn't mix. When I joined Jethro Tull they were already pretty big; with Black Sabbath I feel it's better because I'm part of a group that's trying to make it."

Tony describes Black Sabbath's music as heavy rock. The first time I heard it was on a Saturday afternoon when I was doing a bit of trendy posing with dark glasses and a large vodka in the Chelsea Drugstore. It's not an exaggeration to say that over half the people in the place stopped camping it up to listen to the album. There are all sorts of good things on the LP, and unlike some groups, no one member has it all his own way. Things are shared out evenly and the overall result is one of compactness and imagination.

When I asked Tony if he thought underground music had begun to level out now, he replied, "There's a lot more to come, things are going to get better. People are learning things all the time. There are a lot of amateur

groups who are really good, but people don't give them a chance. There's a group called Hot Spring Water in Cumberland who are great, but they don't get the breaks.

"If people would listen to more groups they'd realise the talent that's about. It's hard getting the breaks and we're lucky they've started happening for us. We couldn't do a thing at first."

Tony is very interested in jazz and he has a liking for some of the brass sounds of Blood, Sweat & Tears and Chicago. He hopes to see them both during the group's forthcoming American tour.

"We're worried about this 'black magic group' bit in America; people might take us seriously," he said. "We might change some of the words of the songs so that we don't have any trouble! If we get the time I'd like to see Joe Pass; he's a fine guitarist and one of my early influences. It's people like him and Alvin Lee that I like, they've got a style of their own. You can listen to them and think, 'I've never heard that before.' They have their own thing going without having all these Clapton things creeping in."

On stage, Black Sabbath do a 25-minute version of their number "Warning". It features a 15-minute solo by Tony, who admits that he often plays whatever comes into his head, the others picking up their instruments and following him as best they can, though there are some set patterns.

Black Sabbath are already booked for a few festivals this year, so the breaks they wanted are becoming reality. So fear not when going to see them; you won't have to take hammers, stakes and crosses to ward off evil spirits, you can just sit back, relax and enjoy the wholesome music. If they let you relax. *Richard Green*

— MELODY MAKER JULY 11 —

"WE HAVE NEVER practised black magic on stage. In fact, we're anti-black magic," said Bill Ward, drummer with Black Sabbath this week.

Sabbath, whose first LP, called *Black Sabbath*, has been in the MMLP chart for 13 weeks, have been put in a bag that they do not fit. "Since we became known it has been a complete mix-up; we have continually been put in the same bracket as Black Widow. They practise black magic on stage, with ritual killings and things.

"But," added Bill, "we are completely anti-black magic. Some stage numbers we do are against black magic. One song in particular called 'Black Sabbath' is against black magic and all its implications."

When the group – John Osbourne (vocal and harmonica), Tony Iommi (guitar), Geezer Butler (bass), and Bill Ward (drums) – changed their name to Black Sabbath, their troubles began. If you have a "black" in your group name these days you immediately become an occult rock group.

"It was very difficult in the beginning," explained Bill. "But we're gradually clearing this mistake up. As we get better known the barriers break down."

Black Sabbath started off its life as Earth. "We used to be called Earth – after earth blues. Then we came back from a trip to Germany and heard a record by Earth, and as it wasn't us we changed our name to Black Sabbath."

The group started life as four friends who jammed together. And during a period when they were all out of work they decided to form a group. "Tony Iommi and I had been playing together, and sometimes we would jam with the others. Then one day when Tony and I returned from a trip to Carlisle, he and Geezer said let's form a group. So we started getting it together in a Birmingham cellar."

A year ago, the group had its biggest hang-up to date. At that time they were going through a particularly bad period with few gigs. And during this time lead guitarist Tony Iommi was offered a job as lead guitar with Jethro Tull, who had just lost Mick Abrahams.

"We're worried about this 'black magic group' bit in America"

BLACK SABBATH HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH SPOOKS!

says lead guitar TONY



own way. Things are shared evenly and the overall result is one of compactness and imagination.

When I asked Tony if he thought Underground music had begun to level out now, he replied, "There's a lot more to come. Things are learning things all the time. There are a lot of amateur groups who are really good. People don't give them a chance. There's a group called Hot Spring Water in Cumberland who



"The new LP is much heavier": recording second album *Paranoid* at Regent Sound Studios, London, June 17, 1970

But Tony was soon back with his friends. "I only stayed with Jethro Tull for two weeks. It was just like doing a nine-to-five job. The group would meet, play a gig and then split. Whereas with our group we are all good friends; we not only work as a group but we all live together," said Tony.

The group have just finished their second LP which will be released in September and a single which is released in three weeks. "This LP is much better than the last one. We have put a lot of hours into it. The trouble with the first LP was that we only had two days to record it in; most of the songs were recorded in one take. The new LP is much heavier; I like it better that way," said Tony.

"The single, 'Paranoid', we wrote ourselves mucking around in the studio. We taped it for the LP, but decided to release it as a single."

The band, who work extremely hard doing as many as seven gigs a week, are taking things a bit easier now and cutting down on dates. "Our money has been trebled due to the success of the LP. This is giving us a chance to rest a little. I think we shall cut down on gigs," said Tony.

The group was due to go to the States soon, but with student unrest in the States they have become a victim of many clubs closing down. "We were hoping to play the Fillmores, but both of them are closed for the summer. So now we have to wait until September when the colleges open again," said Tony.

Then, saying goodbye, the group loaded themselves into their van ready for another long journey. *Mark Plummer*

— NME JULY 13 —

BLACK SABBATH ARE just about fed up with being continually mistaken for other groups with similar-sounding names who dabble in black magic. The fact that they now have a best-selling album firmly secured in the charts hasn't eased the situation; it's got worse. As their lead singer Ozzy Osbourne told me over nothing stronger than coffee.

"It's got so bad that recently a German promoter who had booked us sent return airfares for the group – and if need be a one-way ticket if we decided on using a sacrificial victim."

As if to protect themselves from the unseen powers of darkness, hobgoblins and bogeymen, they were each wearing a large silver antique crucifix around their necks. Even the fact that there was a black cat playing happily at our feet wasn't looked upon as an omen. Ozzy, whose name is tattooed 'OZZY' on the fingers of one of his hands, continued:

"Black magic is a thing that we're trying to help stamp out. There has always been an interest in these primeval black arts, but it was such magazines

like *Man*, *Myth & Magic*, helped along by the press, that blew it all up out of proportion.

"With our name Black Sabbath, people therefore assumed that this was our scene. For some unknown reasons, people seem to expect something out of the ordinary when we appear."

Guitarist Tony Iommi, (he's the one with the longest, blackest and bushiest coiffure of the quartet) interrupted. "We want to excite our audiences, but only with our music, which is mainly based on simple riffs and a heavy beat. Some people have put us down for this, but we like what we play, and it seems that everyone else does... so that's it."

Even after four months on the best-selling album chart, they are still totally amazed at their success, especially after the negative response the album received on its release.

With an almost naive innocence, they rushed out to buy all the music papers on that memorable day, only to find that they had been savagely attacked by virtually all the critics.

"It completely threw us," Tony commented. "What had gone wrong? Were we as bad as they made us out to be? It really made us stop and think."

Recalling those days, bassist Geezer Butler reflected, "Then just when our spirits seemed at their lowest, the album suddenly made its surprise appearance in the charts."

Breaking his silence, Sabbath's drummer Bill Ward quipped, "It made the 18 months leading up to the making of this album all seem worthwhile."

So how does a virtually unknown group from Birmingham with a handful of bad reviews suddenly become such a big success? Ozzy again seemed to have the answer.

"In about the space of six months before our album came out, we had built up loyal pockets of fans all over the country. When it was eventually released they all went out and bought it, and that was sufficient enough to put it in the charts and create a demand. Also it would be the same old story of whatever the critics put down, the public usually digs."

Terry, or Geezer as he is now known, threw in, "They even slammed Led Zeppelin's first album. We've already started on our next album, which we hope to complete in New York. I can tell you that two of the tracks will be 'War Pigs' and 'Fairies Wear Boots.'"

In a final effort to define Black Sabbath's policy towards the black magic cult in pop music, Ozzy concluded: "We are trying to get away on the sheer merits of our music. We don't need to have naked birds leaping all over the stage or try and conjure up the devil. But the way things are at the moment, some people will expect flames to shoot out of the cover of our next album."

Roy Carr •



“Christ, I sound different”

SANDY DENNY makes
a fresh start with
FOTHERINGAY, a new
folk-rock band. Still, this
forthright, poll-winning
singer faces accusations
of careerism. “People
have been really nasty,”
she says. Meanwhile, how
are the “mother band”
FAIRPORT CONVENTION
coping without her?

— NME MARCH 14 —

SANDY DENNY, BRITAIN'S best girl singer if we judge by ears and not polls, emerges later this month in concert with her new group Fotheringay after an association with Fairport Convention that produced three good to great to excellent albums and saw the group grow likewise.

When she left Fairport towards the end of last year, along with founder member guitarist Tyger Hutchings, it came as a shattering blow to devotees of a group whose following is one of the most loyal there is. The loss of Tyger, as an instrumentalist, could be absorbed as other losses had been, but Sandy, as focal point and voice, would be another matter.

And due to a lack of facts as to why Sandy did decide to go, public sympathy hasn't been completely on her side.

“I kept reading in the papers about my going solo,” she said, talking for the first time about the split on Monday. “And it was just not true. It made out like I was doing a big star solo thing and leaving to get more money and status. A couple of people have come up to me and have been really nasty about it.”

Recognising that what went in the papers was what was put out by her and Fairport's office, she went on, “I wanted to tell people what the circumstances were but it seemed too difficult to go into the reasons. It was for a lot of reasons really. For one I didn't want to go to America with them in January, and they were frightened I might let them down. »

GETTY



Sandy Denny in 1970:
"Everybody's traits
are coming out a bit,
and the music is
getting a lot louder"

I had already let them down once when we were going to Copenhagen. I didn't turn up for the plane. They were very keen about America and I was getting more and more neurotic about the idea because I have never been keen on flying and travelling. They thought I would freak out on them at the last minute, so they said it would be better if I left. I was already coming to the same decision."

Sandy's problems were the same most girls face in a gigging group. "I used to love performing but hate travelling. Travelling around in the van for hours on end, though it wasn't the van so much really, it's that you miss home comforts. Always getting stuck in some terrible boarding house with a bed as hard as rock. I think they will be much happier now I won't have to do that. They are great company; I am really fond of

them, but the business situation always arises somewhere, along the line. They weren't musical reasons at all. The reason Tyger left was because he wanted to do traditional stuff. I think it's the best thing he could have done. I hear he is really happy now. I look upon Fairport as the mother group. They've had a lot of people dropping out but they still go on and will be a popular unit for a long time to come."

So Sandy and her talent now emerge in Fotheringay, taken from the title of a song she wrote for Fairport's *What We Did On Our*

Holidays LP along with her boyfriend Trevor Lucas, Jerry Donahue and Pat Donaldson, both from Poet & The One Man Band, and Gerry Conway, who was with Trevor in Election until their group broke up about the same time Sandy quit Fairport. After she left, Sandy spent two months thinking out her future but had had the idea "for ages of getting a group together with Trevor".

They've been rehearsing in a soundproof room at Sandy's Fulham home – although they've had to stagnate for the past fortnight while Jerry fulfils dates in Germany with his old band. Fotheringay makes its London concert debut at the Festival Hall on March 30. Sandy won't have so much travelling round with the new band as the size of their PA system and the type of sound they want will require the use of large halls.

"We wanted to do a lot of acoustic stuff and we went to see Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young at the Albert Hall and they do a lot of acoustic and it was so good. But in England there isn't so much chance to get a good acoustic sound because of the PA. It has to be brought over from America, which costs a fortune, or you have to build it yourself. So Trevor designed it and Charlie Watkins at WEM made it up. I haven't seen it yet but I've heard they're like huge coffins on end. We're going to try it out tonight."

The group will be playing electric numbers as well, but Sandy will play only acoustic, with singing, of course, and "a bit of flame piano" thrown in. Trevor will also play guitar, with Pat on bass, Jerry Donahue on lead and Gerry Conway on drums. Most of their repertoire will be new material – Sandy's writing quite a lot – with a few traditional songs. But nothing of Fairport's: "What's the point?"

Their first album is scheduled for April/May and a start has been made with a couple of numbers. She's very nervous about their debut but not too worried about the inevitable comparisons with her old outfit.

"Unless they say I should have stayed with Fairport. That would really do me in." And as a parting note: "I feel very nostalgic when I see Fairport, especially live, but I don't regret it at all." Nick Logan

— MM SEPTEMBER 19 —

THE TAXI DRIVER knew exactly where she lived. "Oh, it's the singers you want, is it? It's exactly five miles away," he said over his shoulder, as we drove away from Chichester station, the sixpences clicking away on his meter like the gobbling of an implacable fruit machine.

He was not unduly impressed about their presence in the neighbourhood. After all, he had often driven Mick Jagger to Keith Richards' house, Redlands, which was a mile beyond our destination. And Chichester was full of famous people at this time of year, with the theatre festival on.

SINGLES REVIEW 1970

"I can't see the point of doing this" MM FEB 14 Sandy Denny goes on a Blind Date with the new singles.

Simon & Garfunkel

Bridge Over Troubled Water CBS

That's Paul Simon and it's a great record. I don't believe Art comes in until right at the end. Are you going to give me these records afterwards? I didn't know he had so much power in his voice (Sandy sings along). The record has been fantastically produced, like all their more recent records. Oh! Art didn't come in at the end.

Strawbs Josephine For Better Or For Worse

FROM THE A&M LP *DRAGONFLY*

It's the Strawbs, and the record's called "Josephine For Better Or For Worse". I wish them all the best of luck as they never seem to have much luck. It's a great record which I'm sure will give a lot of people a lot of enjoyment. Dave Cousins sings very well on this track.

Dionne Warwick

I'll Never Fall In Love Again WAND

It sounds like Dionne Warwick. I prefer this to the Bobby Gentry version, it's much better. She's great – I love her voice, but I wouldn't buy the record. It's a superb version, though.

High Level Ranters The Golden Eagle

FROM THE TRAILERS LP *THE LADS OF NORTHUMBRIA*

Is it Tom Gilfellow? Yes, and that's Johnny Handle playing in the High Level Ranters. They're absolutely incredible. One night we were sitting around in Newcastle and they played for absolutely hours. I like Gilfellow's little bass runs.

Johnny Cash & June Carter

If I Were A Carpenter CBS

Johnny Cash, and that's June Carter. I really don't like it. Please take it off. The song's been so overdone.

John Mayall Walking On Sunset

FROM THE DECCA LP *THE WORLD OF JOHN MAYALL*

What label's it on? I'm very confused by this, but I think it's John Mayall. Is it a new record? Oh, it's a reissue, that's a bit of a nasty trick. He really sticks to it, doesn't he? He sings well on this track, too.

Johnny Winter Johnny B Goode

I like the song very much. Is it an American? It could even be Chuck Berry. I don't know Johnny Winter and I can't see the point of doing this. I guess the bloke really enjoyed recording this, though.

Young Tradition Byker Hill

FROM THE TRANSATLANTIC LP *YOUNG TRADITION SAMPLER*

I can't say anything except the Young Tradition were absolutely superb and it's a dreadful shame they've broken up. I went to their farewell performance at Cecil Sharp House, which was a knockout. I believe Pete Bellamy's doing a solo thing now. This really is super.

Sly & The Family Stone Thank You Falettinme Be Mice Elf Agin

DIRECTION

It's really incredibly like a machine; I'm just waiting for the steam to come out. It really makes me nervous listening to it. It's not got much tune, has it? Sly? Yes, I don't mind them. A lot of work must have gone into this, and I can't say I'm keen. But I think there'll be an awful lot of people who'll buy it.

Steamhammer Turn Around

FROM THE CBS LP *MK II*

Is it The Liverpool Scene? I thought that was Adrian Henri talking. Don't tell me, I must try and guess this. I'm trying to think of the flute player. Steamhammer? It's quite pleasant but I'm not particularly impressed by this track. In fact it's becoming monotonously boring.





March 30, 1970: Fotheringay
– (l-r) Jerry Donahue, Trevor
Lucas, Gerry Conway, Sandy
Denny, Pat Donaldson – at the
Royal Festival Hall, London



Chaffinches Farm lay at the end of a long gravel drive – a neat brick building with a grove of shrubs and trees on its right. Sandy Denny rents it, and spends most of the time there with the rest of Fotheringay and their chicks

in a mode of life that fits snugly into the conventional idea of getting it together in the country. She still keeps her flat in a large house where Fairport Convention have the top floor.

So we all sit in the large kitchen: Sandy, Pat Donaldson, the bassist, Gerry Conway, the drummer, a couple of girls who flit in and out, and two little sisters who keep coming in with potatoes they have dug up in the garden. The conversation drifts as languidly as the smoke of our cigarettes. The most important topic, it seems, is the discovery of shelves for storing apples in an adjoining shed; they can have apple pie all winter, they coo. Sandy is a chatterer, always nattering away, like the big black mynah bird, Coco, that is conducting a monologue in its cage in the corner of the kitchen. Her conversation suddenly flies off at tangents to embrace the merits of a Lord Buckley album, or a track on a Bill Crosby album; it veers like a sailing ship at the mercy of a fickle wind.

She is a small but heavily built young lady, with a noticeably large bosom and a face that defies any suggestions of showbiz glamour. It's a real honest-to-god English folk singer's face; there is no trace of that saintly purity of feature that American girl singers, like Joan Baez and Judy Collins always have. It belongs to the small, bare upstairs rooms of English pubs, where everyone is downing pints and the person in the seat at your elbow suddenly gets up and sings unaccompanied a 20-verse traditional. It's a wholesome, country barmaid's face that makes you feel at home.

She was pleased she had won the *MM* poll, but not in personal terms. She knows she is not the conventional idea of a female singer, so she figures her success is a victory for music.

I am positive she is right. What is the most important in a song to you – the lyric or the melody?

"Both. If the lyric was good and the tune bad I wouldn't sing the song, and vice versa. But if I wrote it then I would hope that both were as good as each other. If you write something it should be a complete piece of work, and if you are not happy surely you don't play it until you are. As long as the lyrics go together from A to Z you should be quite happy with it."

Do you think general lyrics in folk and folk rock are better than in pure pop? Do you think that the people who write them have more interesting things to say?

"Yes I do, I really do, but you are not picking out anybody in particular, so I can't really say whether I agree or disagree. But if you are just generalising, I would say that on the whole the people who write folk... but, you see, it is difficult because what do you term as being pop? If you mean, like, the ones in the Top 10 that don't appeal to me, that would be, say, seven out of 10."



Reticent but funky

MM JUNE 27 Fotheringay's "magnificent" debut.

FOTHERINGAY EMBODY THE parts of the Fairports that I liked best: the drawn-out traditional songs, plus that light funky quality derived from Dylan and The Band. Their first album is well up to their capabilities, particularly an eight-minute version of the anti-war ballad "Banks Of The Nile", which sounds just as relevant now as it must have done in Thomas Hardy's day.

But apart from that, the music on this track is perfectly stunning. Sandy stretches the line, hanging and suspending it, as only she can do, while the guitars and drums play perfectly synchronised riffs behind. "Banks Of The Nile" is probably the best rock arrangement I've ever heard, simple as that, and the rest of the album isn't far behind, particularly their version of Gordon Lightfoot's "The Way I Feel".

Their success lies in the fact that as well as having a wonderful front-lady, they also have four musicians who are completely in sympathy and are able to subjugate the power of their playing with the kind of reticence which can produce great music. All of them – Trevor Lucas (rhythm guitar, vocals), Jerry Donahue (lead guitar), Pat Donaldson (bass), and Gerry Conway (drums) – are magnificent and their album is likewise. This is what British music must aspire to. *Richard Williams*



but there might be three that I like; for what reasons, I don't know. It is different for me because I can enjoy things for the sound of them.

"I can enjoy something like The Jackson Five, for instance, because the production and way it has been done is amazing. I can't hear the words that little kid is singing, but I think the sound is amazing. I can really dig that, but I couldn't do it myself."

Which of the albums did you like best that you did with the Fairports?

"I liked *Unhalfbricking* very much, but *Liege & Lief* was very good – yes, I do think that I like that one best of all. But I don't play records very much – I don't play Fotheringay much, anyway – because when you are making the album you hear enough of it. But occasionally I will sit down and listen to one of the tracks just to see if I enjoy it still."

Don't you think when you listen to an old album that you could have done certain parts better?

"Oh yes, it is always the same. I mean, I find things naturally that other people wouldn't find wrong with my singing, that I think personally are wrong. The notes may not be wrong, but how I sang it came out a little bit differently from how I really intended it to be. I think that *Liege & Lief* was technically the best record I made with them. But I wasn't really very happy with the vocal sound I got on that, frankly."

"*Liege & Lief* has my favourite Fairport track on it – 'Tam Lin'. Yes, it's great, do you like that? I do like that one myself, I must say. It's a great song."

"That bit that Dave Swarbrick does (*hums a fiddle passage*) is, like, the favourite bit on the album. Very Romanian sound that had, I thought. The drumming

was excellent on that, too. Very thick textures, and very precise. Dave Mattacks has got a really precise way of drumming."

How did Fotheringay come about?

"I knew Gerry Conway and Trevor Lucas well before, both from the Election. The group has been going about six months; it started in March. We did our first gig at Birmingham Town Hall in March."

"That was incredible. We had only been together a month – no, two weeks. But I'm glad we did it because it got us started, like, realising how terrible we were to start with earlier than we would have done if it had lasted a few more months. We were a bit ragged, but what can you expect? We weren't really ready for it, but it doesn't matter now, of course. Things have gone great, fantastic."

Do you see the group moving in a very different direction from Fairport Convention?

"We are rapidly changing. What we did first was an initial bunch of material to get us started; now it has got hardly anything to do with that. As you work together more and more you begin to understand what people in the group are really like and what their music is like, and things are really changing because of that. It is not a conscious change; it's

because we have all got ideas within ourselves that we did not know each other well enough in the beginning to bring out in the open in case one of us did not agree. At that point it would have been very bad to have a riff right at the beginning. But I think we have developed our own sound now."

Well, how are Fotheringay going to progress?

"Pat is a rock bass more than a folk bass – he is really developing a good style now, but until now he has basically played sort of heavy music, like loud rock, and Gerry Conway has also played very heavy up until now. When we first got the group together it was much quieter because of the actual concept of the group being mainly acoustic, and using the big PA, we had to promote a better acoustic sound, which nobody seems to have been doing until then. But as we have got older as a group, everybody's traits are coming out a bit, and the music is getting a lot louder."

Is this your own wish as well?

"Sure. From now on what the group does is fine. What they do with my songs, which may have been written in a completely different mood, is great. I like what they do, so I am not going to turn round and say, 'Oh, I want quiet music because I am a girl, I am all gentle and sweet.'"

Will this affect at all your singing style, which I always associate with a clear, limpid sound?

"No... well, anything will affect my singing style because I am changing all the time, and I can sing very loud, really loud, but... you know, these questions are very difficult for me to answer, because it is like asking me what I am going to be doing on March 20 next year."

What I mean is, will you change the tone of your voice if the band becomes heavier?

"No, why should I? I can only sing a certain way. I could probably do some imitations of people, but it wouldn't be very good because it wouldn't be the original. And anyway, I prefer to... I mean, I can't tell you if I will because the next time you hear us I might be really blasting out with some incredible tone in my voice that I did not discover until the day before. But as it is now, I am a lot more versatile, my voice is incredibly more versatile than when I first started singing. I did not know that I could do what I am doing now. I am not saying that is good or anything, but I am saying that experience is the only thing that will tell you how your voice changes. The only way I can tell is by listening to old records I made and noticing that, Christ, I sound different." *Michael Watts*

— MELODY MAKER MAY 16 —

Songs with guts and drive

MM AUG 29 Fotheringay impress at the Lyceum.



CATEGORIES ASIDE, FOTHERINGAY have to be one of the best music bands in the country. At their best, they play wonderfully thoughtful, finely balanced music with particular attention to arrangement and detail.

This never degenerates into fussiness, however, and they put their songs over with the sort of quiet guts and drive which has too often been ignored. At the Lyceum on Sunday night they played a typically lovely set, divided between the funky Band-like songs which Trevor Lucas sings and Sandy Denny's flawless, elastic ballads.

Her voice is incredible. She seems to let the lines uncurl themselves, rather than forcing them out, and her timing – particularly on the touching "Silver Threads And Golden Needles" – was exquisite. The instrumental work throughout was a model of discreet inventiveness, each player seeming to float like a soloist and yet all coming together to produce the most homogenous of backings.

High Tide were a disappointment. At times they are capable of recreating the sound and style of that most underrated of American bands, Sea Train, with violin to the fore, and yet mostly they seem to concentrate on stale, predictable improvisation over a leaden beat. Their use of an inverted Bo Diddley riff in 5/4 was not as interesting as it sounds.

Bronco were considerably livelier, with Jess Roden singing fiercely and the band playing well on "House Of The Rising Sun". They'll bear watching. *Richard Williams.*

1970

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WATFORD: Clements Department Store.





The post-Denny/Hutchings Fairport Convention pose in May 1970, on their first US tour: (l-r) Dave Mattacks (front), Dave Pegg, Simon Nicol, Richard Thompson and Dave Swarbrick (front)

the tragic incident which killed Martin Lamble, and later by recording commitments.

The all-English folk-rock group had been away two weeks when I phoned guitarist Simon Nicol at Fairports' Los Angeles hotel.

"Right now we're halfway through a week with Rick Nelson, and last week we were working with Jethro Tull. We decided to take our own football along, but there doesn't seem to be a lot of places left to play football as all the open spaces are being built on."

On the face of things, Fairports' belated visit has also seen a change of style, as they have moved right away from the American-influenced music they were producing in the early days to the now exclusive traditional English songs placed in a rock setting.

Simon confessed that the group didn't really know what to expect. "People seem to think we're pretty weird, and they either like it a lot, or it's leaving them cold. It's easy to tell we're playing to American audiences, but they know what we're like as they've been getting all our albums. The trouble is that the albums have all been a bit behind and *Liege & Lief* has only just come out, which is unfortunate because they're finding that we're now without a girl singer. The funny thing is that the kids seem to know a lot of these old traditional things."

"People in America seem to think we're pretty weird"

When I spoke to Simon, the band were contemplating whether to attend a mass open-air convention at one of the universities in L.A. "It's all rather frightening and really a case of taking a chance, because you don't know how many people will turn up. Things have gone pretty smoothly, generally. We've not met with any violence, although you can't speak to anyone without the university massacre or the Cambodia thing being brought up. Every time you pick up a newspaper or switch on the radio, they're talking about it, and I haven't heard a good word spoken about either issue. Everyone seems to be holding a double hate campaign and it's getting exasperating."

"So far, we've just played the West Coast. We spent two days in New York at the beginning of the tour, but didn't actually play there; we were putting the finishing touches to the album which comes out in a few weeks' time. Dave Swarbrick had to go to the dentist in New York, which proved to be pretty unnerving because apart from the expense, he had to have some kind of new gas. He's OK now though."

"The tour ends in the middle of June, by which time we'll have worked coast to coast. Next week we move on to Detroit, and at the moment it's proving to be pretty hectic, but you tend to make it hectic simply because there's so much to see and do." *Jeremy Gilbert* •

GETTY

“People think we know the answers. We don’t”

So what of THE BEATLES? John is abroad. Paul communicates only by letter. George and Ringo are on hand to talk, but their collaborators Pete Drake and George Martin also have their views. Have they split? Or are they, as Ringo says, just “unlimited”?

— NME MARCH 14 —

A BEATLE TALKED TO the *NME* this week about the pop sounds of the '70s. According to George Harrison, “I’m glad people are dropping this word progressive, because most music is progressive anyway! In my own case I’ve always tried to improve and not got over the same ground again and again.

“Today’s music is getting better all the time, but the tag of underground and progressive in the terms of John Peel – and all those groups he plugs and has on his record label – that’s just a load of c____! There’s no more progression in that than in God-knows-what. There are a lot of good bands who do get put in that bag, but there’s also a lot of pretentiousness. I remember that when The Beatles and Stones became popular, it became the slick thing to then become ‘underground’. But what is underground? It’s like playing electric guitar like Eric Clapton played five years ago, and all that screechy guitar scene. That’s the joke. I’ll say this. If anybody’s in an underground group and really thinks they are underground, that’s a tragedy!

“I like Jethro Tull, and Blodwyn Pig are good. Both of them have got a good measure of originality – and that’s what we want. Originality. So-called underground groups are no more underground than The Beatles are pop.”

Good, guarded and now and again knife-edged vibrations filled the air at the Apple offices a day or so ago. An afternoon of “Govinda” and the Radha Krishna Temple had turned to dusk in the friendship of the press office. Now it was early evening, with music and conversation, George Harrison on the guitar and the defensive Ringo on ad-lib and stomping Yeti boots. And for the company and warmth of us all, there sat a hot, snug fire »

GETTY



George Harrison in
New York City, May 1970:
"We had to find ourselves,
individually, one day"

at the top of the echoing empty room. As time passed by we heard the sound of music and a singing McCartney creeping through from next door, and we jumped up as one and raced across the floor and through the door to the TV, to watch the year-old film of a united Beatles performing “Let It Be” on *Top Of The Pops*.

Then it was back to the hearth and a seat and a view of Ringo’s toe-tapping feet, colourfully clad in furry, hairy knee-high boots that bumped up and down to the beat of George Harrison singing a pointedly cynical version of Doris Troy’s “Ain’t That Cute”. Ringo also played tracks from his forthcoming album of golden oldies, among them “Bye Bye Blackbird” and a smooth “Whispering Grass” that could well stand up as a commercial single. Next, guitar-pluckin’ George gave a short rendition of a memorable song Ringo has just written called “It Don’t Come Easy”.

I am happy to report that the *Let It Be* TV film was warmly received by both George and Ringo, and that both of them remain aggressively loyal to the continuation of The Beatles as a unit and as individuals. According to Ringo, “Everything’s fine. But I’ve got things to do, and George has got things to do, and Paul has his solo album to come, and John has his peace thing. We can’t do everything at once. Time will tell.”

According to George, “Say we’ve got unity through diversity, because that’s what it is – unity through diversity. We still see each other, still make contact. But we had to find ourselves, individually, one day. It was the natural course of events.

“The thing is that so many people think we know all the answers about The Beatles, and we don’t. Who are we to say? We can’t give the answer, and I for one can’t define that special something that made us as we are. I know it wasn’t just the records or our concerts. You tell me.”

He’s a deep and complex person, this George Harrison, and as long as I’ve known him and as much as I like him, I find it difficult to define the man beneath. The balance within him is fine between love and good and bad and some kind of bitter mistrust of some people, among them members of the press.

George’s interest in the principles of the Radha Krishna Temple go considerably further than that of record producer of the temple’s mantras, and his obsession with finding himself still never fails to surprise those who expect only a Beatle and a ready quip.

“If there’s a God,” he told me, “I want to see him. It’s pointless to believe in something without proof, and with Krishna, here is a method where you can actually obtain ‘God perception’. You can actually see God, and hear Him, play with Him. It might sound crazy, but He is actually there actually with you.”

Of his present and future career, George told me, “I think I’ll take a break soon, and probably go back to India. Out of the new records, from Apple, I’ve done: “Let It Be” with Paul; “Instant Karma” with John; “Ain’t That Cute” for Doris Troy; the record with Jackie Lomax; an album with Billy Preston; the records with Radha Krishna Temple; and now possibly a single with Ringo. And maybe, if I get a chance, I’ll get round to doing something for myself! I’ve almost become a full-time Apple record producer, but I’m going to have to stop. I don’t want to be a producer or anything in particular. I don’t want to die as ‘George Harrison record producer’, or ‘George Harrison lead guitarist’ or even just a Beatle. They’re all me, but they’re not really me. The moment people start type-casting, then it’s time to move on. I’m unlimited. We’re all unlimited!”

Alan Smith

— MELODY MAKER MAY 2 —

WHOO DOES PAUL McCartney think he is? We don’t see anything of him for a year, and then out he pops from his mysterious hermit-like existence, advertising his new record in a publicity-crazed manner. Does he really think we’ll believe that he played all the instruments? Let’s face it, Mailbag, we’re not suckers. It’s obvious George Martin had a lot to do with it. In fact if you listen carefully to the end of the third track played backwards, you can almost hear him whistling. *Paul McCartney*

May 20, 1970: none of The Beatles will attend, but crowds still gather for the *Let It Be* premiere at the London Pavilion (now the Trocadero), Piccadilly Circus



— MELODY MAKER AUGUST 29 —

NO DOUBT THERE were plenty of scoffs when it was announced that Ringo Starr was going to Nashville to record a country album. Remembering that wheezy voice intoning “*They’re gonna put me in the movies*” and the very real horror of his ballad album, music-lovers around the globe must have squirmed at the thought of another helping of the same. I know I did.

Well, I have news for everybody. Ringo’s country album is finished, and it’s a solid gas – thanks to Pete Drake, steel-guitarist extraordinary. I met Pete in Nashville, where, at 37 years old, he is the top exponent of the pedal steel, working through some 600 recording sessions a year as well as being in charge of his own record label (Stop Records) and his own publishing company, Window Music.

Ringo met up with Pete in London earlier this year, while Drake was on a flying visit to play on George Harrison’s solo album. Drake and his sidekick Chuck Nevard persuaded Ringo to go to Nashville to cut his country record, instead of doing it in London with imported musicians, and Starr readily agreed. “I gave him a hundred songs to choose from,” says Pete, “and he took them to his hotel room and listened to every last one of them. Eventually he managed to whittle them down to a dozen, which we arranged and recorded in the studios here.”

Drake, with immodest humour, claims responsibility for the high quality (really!) of Ringo’s singing: “I made him go over the songs again and again until he had some confidence in himself. After we’d recorded them he kept ringing me up and saying that he’d been listening to the tapes and he couldn’t believe it was him. I guess no one had taken that much trouble with him before. But we did the sessions very quickly. We used only 12 people – including Jerry Reed on guitar – and had all the tunes down in three days.”

Pete played me the finished tapes of the album, and it would be an understatement to say that I was stunned. Ringo sings with terrific confidence, sometimes adopting a hilarious quasi-Tennessee accent, and the backing musicians (with much steel guitar and Dobro in evidence) play beautifully.

It’s likely to be called *Beaucoup De Blues*, which in prime Nashvillean becomes “Boocoud Blues”, after one of the tracks, and a single is likely to be picked from one of two songs: “Love Don’t Last Long”, a pretty ballad written by Nevard, and “Without Her”, not the Harry Nilsson song but a nice pop-country tune with beautiful chorus work at the end.

Drake is originally from Atlanta, Georgia, and came to Nashville in 1959. It’s worth recording that in Atlanta he had a regular working band which included, simultaneously, Joe South, Roger Miller, Doug Kershaw and Jerry Reed. In Nashville he “almost starved to death” before landing a gig with Don Gibson, of “Sea Of Heartbreak” fame. He began recording



around 1960/61, and since then has averaged three sessions a day with country favourites like Jim Reeves, Tammy Wynette, Porter Wagoner and Roy Drusky, as well as playing on many of Elvis Presley's sessions. Other pop stars who've had the benefit of his back-up have been Perry Como, Bobby Vinton and Joan Baez.

Pete had a million-selling single, "Forever", on the Smash label, in 1964, which gained popularity through his use of the "talking steel guitar", an extraordinary invention which uses rubber piping to produce the sound of the human voice through the instrument. But it was his association with Bob Dylan which brought him to the attention of a younger generation of listeners.

"Bob was in town recording the *John Wesley Harding* album," Pete remembers "and he and Bob Johnston, his producer, decided they wanted to use a steel on two or three tracks. So I went in and played on 'Down Along The Cove' and 'I'll Be Your Baby Tonight'.

"Dylan and I hit it off so well that he decided to use me on all his things. Musically, we think quite a lot alike, and to me he's the Jimmie Rodgers – the old Jimmie Rodgers – of today. He's fantastic, he writes such fine melodies. I like his lyrics too, but

being a musician, I dig his tunes. I really love 'Lay Lady Lay' and I told him that would be a good single. In fact I did a single of it myself later, on my own label, that went up to 16 or 17 in the national country charts. I'm now planning two instrumental albums – one of Dylan tunes and another of Beatles numbers."

Does Pete think that the Nashville sound has shipped up rock, or has rock shipped up Nashville? "It works both ways. The kids are getting more lyric-conscious, so that there's not so much noise and the songs have to mean something. Country music has always been that way. George's album is fantastic, too. Dylan recommended me to George, and he wanted me to come to London for a month, but I told him I could only spare four or five days because I have so much business to take care of.

"His album is fantastic – it's not country, but his songs are so good. He's a tough writer. I got on real well with Phil Spector; he's a hell of a producer and he's got a track record you can't question. But George knocked me out. He lives 40 miles outside of London, yet he came to the airport to see me off. It seemed that I could do no wrong and he's the kind of person I'd work my tail off for.

"Dylan is another cat you'd kill yourself for – he lets you play what you want to play. People are screaming that he shouldn't have recorded 'Blue Moon', but he did it because it was one of his favourite tunes, and he shouldn't let anybody tie him down. I really love working with all these younger guys. It's very rewarding, because Ringo, for instance, knows more about country music than most Nashville musicians!" *Richard Williams*

— MM AUGUST 29 —

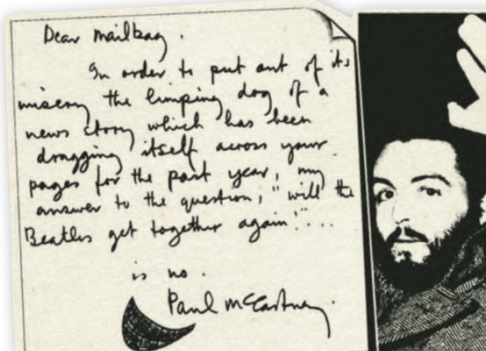
DEAR MAILBAG,
In order to put out of its misery the limping dog of a news story which has been dragging itself across your pages for the past year, my answer to the question, "Will the Beatles get together again?"... is no.

Paul McCartney

— NME OCTOBER 17 —

IT IS NOW almost 100 per cent certain that The Beatles will never, ever record together again! Though individual members of the group – if it can any longer be called a group – will undoubtedly choose to make solo albums and record other artists, the likelihood of the four getting together is as remote as the possibility of The Who recording "Silent Night".

"My answer to, 'Will The Beatles get together again?'... is no"



All the stories, tales, whispers and rumours of an irrevocable split between John Lennon and Paul McCartney were as good as concretely confirmed by George Martin, The Beatles' record producer, when we spoke in his new studios. "It all depends on Paul and John," he replied, when I asked him about the possibility of further Beatles recording sessions. "If they want to work together again."

John continues to use EMI's Abbey Road studios, where almost all the group's work was done. George Harrison frequents the Trident studios in Soho. Paul does much of his recording at home and Ringo has recently been at George Martin's new AIR studios at Oxford Circus.

Showing me round the vast £400,000 complex, George commented, "I think The Beatles would have liked these studios. They would have liked a place of their own, but it never came about for various reasons. That is a pity. The formation of Apple was an example of putting the wrong people in the wrong jobs."

When I suggested that with all their money The Beatles probably didn't worry too much about Apple's decline and not having their own studio, George replied, "That's a pity, too."

A genuinely nice person, with a softly spoken manner, non-smoker George revealed that "Hey Jude" was recorded at Trident and not, as most people assumed, at EMI. Besides confessing to a high regard for Trident, he offered no further explanation.

"Even if The Beatles did decide to record together again, they may find it hard to do so when they choose to. They're the sort of people who decide in the morning that they want to make a record that night," he said, with a small smile. "With all the demand for studio time at the moment, they would probably find it difficult to be able to record in that way. They never really made set plans for recording. It was all done on the spur of the moment. They'd ring me and say, 'We want to go into the studio today.'"

George broke off to have a word with Bern Calvert of The Hollies, who was doing some mixing, then he continued his guided tour of the 10,000-square-foot studios and offices.

"I first thought of having my own studio five years ago," he told me. "I always wanted one when I could afford it. This is a dream come true in a way. I was going to have a small studio, but I realised there were a rash of small studios going up."

With his fellow producers Ron Richards, John Burgess and Peter Sullivan, all of whom are AIR directors, George has equipped three studios, the largest capable of accommodating 70 musicians. Closed-circuit TV enables Studio 3 – the smallest – to be linked to any other studio or room.

A tape library and cutting room, a dubbing theatre, canteen, vending machines and even a room where producers can sleep the night are only part of a most impressive and highly technical layout that is even now – a week after opening – fully booked for some time.

Equipment and furniture has been shipped in from all over the world and there are several gadgets – "I love playing with them," George admits – to change air conditioning and lighting shades and colours. Costs are not cheap (£35 an hour in Studio 1 for 16-track).

Stated George "The swing to multi-track began at about the time of *Sergeant Pepper*. That cost £15,000 in studio costs alone, but with an album like that that sells millions and millions it is well worth all the expense and effort involved."

He added, "If the premises were empty, it would cost £5,000 a month in overheads alone."

He is modestly confident that the studios are going to be a success and a look through the booking list shows that the rush has already started – The Hollies, Ringo, Cilla, The Pipkins, Procol Harum, Harmony Grass and Vince Melouney were a few of the names I spotted.

As a reward for years and years of extremely hard work during which he received an Academy Award Nomination, three Grammy Awards, nine Grammy Award nominations and the Ivor Novello Award for services to music, AIR and its undoubted subsequent success is fitting for a man like George Martin. But what a pity the man they called the Fifth Beatle may never get together with the other four again. *Richard Green* •

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NEED ANY BACK ISSUES?
SEE PAGE 144

Readers' letters

MM JAN-MAR Fairports split, Bonzos bow out and all hail The Who's top roadie...

SOFTLY SOFTLY

Why no mention of Soft Machine in your selection of probable New Year successes? 1969 was their year for gaining wider public attention, but still they seem sadly underrated by the majority of "progressive" listeners. This is particularly amazing when one considers the presence of Mike Ratledge, who (with apologies to other remarkable group organists - Emerson, Greenslade, Wright, etc) is probably the most original organist in Britain, and is certainly the most distinctive. Alternating cool "wa-wa" waves with screeching pinpoints of sound, he is a wonderfully driving and melodic improviser of quite staggering solos. Perhaps in 1970 more people will listen. **BELEY, Havering, Essex (MM Jan 17)**
In last week's Caught In The Act Richard Williams did say this might be Soft Machine's year - Ed.



SPLIT DECISIONS

Fairport, on the lookout for original material, have set the beautiful Robert Burns poem *Tam Lin* to music. It is one of the finest tracks on their current album *Liege & Lief*. I now read that a film version has been made of *Tam Lin* and that the Pentangle have been commissioned to write the music score. I am not questioning Pentangle's competence. They write and play some very good music, but I do consider it rather a cheek. Fairport conceived the idea of setting *Tam Lin* to music, and it is only natural that they should be allowed to compose the full music score as well. **C DRINKWATER, Harrow, Middlesex (MM Jan 17)**

May I say how sorry I was to read that Sandy Denny and Tyger Hutchings have left Fairport Convention. I considered Sandy's "Who knows Where The Time Goes?" to be a standout attraction on their *Unhalfbricking* album. However, I hope the music of this fine band will continue to progress and I know I speak for a great many Fairport fans in wishing Sandy and Tyger every success in their future careers. **SPHILLIPS, Borehamwood, Herts (MM Jan 17)**

I was shocked to hear Vivian Stanshall say that the Bonzo Dog

Band is splitting up, at the Lyceum. I am sure that such original, talented and versatile entertainers will not easily be swept under the carpet as Vivian implied they would. Please tell them that they have been very much appreciated and will be very much missed. **MARION MCCONNELL, Romford, Essex (MM Jan 17)**



FUSION CONFUSION

I am getting rather tired of people raving over American bands who suddenly seem to arrive from nowhere, are hailed as the most subtle jazz-rock fusion ever, and are then quickly forgotten as a new jazz-rock band emerges who are regarded as an even better fusion of the two. At one time you could not open a music paper without reading of Blood, Sweat & Tears. With the emergence of Chicago Transit Authority, BS&T were almost forgotten and the trendy in-crowd and the music papers had new darlings. Now CTA look like being replaced by The Flock.

I am not saying people should not like these bands, but at times it appears that the musical press is geared to finding us new heroes to serve for a couple of weeks as jazz-rock kings and then be replaced. If we must be bombarded with articles on jazz-rock bands, how about more publicity for British groups doing the same thing such as The Battered Ornaments and the very fine Heaven? **BILL FORD, Bath, Somerset (MM Jan 24)**

Recent tours by the American bands Chicago, Love and Spirit were eagerly awaited and, unfortunately, except for Spirit, were disappointing. Chicago seem to be highly overrated as their music is nothing special. Love, who in Arthur Lee's own words, were the "first heavy band", certainly are much ado

about nothing. Their set at the Roundhouse was not better than that of any of the British "heavies". **D WHITE, London SW5 (MM Mar 21)**

KING ARTHUR

Last Thursday we had the honour of playing with US bluesman Arthur "Big Boy" Crudup. Without men like Crudup rock'n'roll could never have been what it was in the '50s or even become what it has today. Elvis Presley has recorded two of his songs, "My Baby Left Me" and "That's All Right Mama", and these songs have sold a lot of records. **SHAKIN' STEVENS & THE SUNSETS (MM Feb 28)**

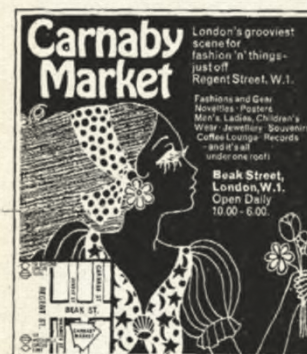
TURN THE PAGE

I read the article on Jimmy Page and I don't see why you waste so much space on such a trite guitarist. Just listen to the LP *Led Zeppelin II*. Nothing but flashy guitar all through it. Even a good blues track - "Bringing It On Home" - cannot last without the show-offy fuzzbox guitar Page uses on every track. If you have so much space in your paper, why not do a write-up on blues guitarists. You get more feeling from one Muddy Waters, Earl Hooker or BB King than a hundred Jimmy Pages. **F SHUSTER, London NW8 (MM Feb 28)**

Congratulations, MM! Yet another "bleep bleep" reader is converted. Your splendid article on Jimmy Page was a refreshing change from the formality of its forerunners, and I hope that this sets the pattern for the series. It highlights the pleasant personality of one of the world's greatest guitarists and gives his massive following some all-too-rare worthwhile reading material. Keep it up! **K SKIPP, Cheshunt, Herts (MM Feb 28)**

BOB WHO

There has recently been plenty of praise for The Who concerning their performances on "live" gigs. This is, of course, fully justified, but I feel that some of this praise is also commanded by their roadie - Bob Pridden. Bob sets up the PA wiring, tunes all the amplifiers and mixers to produce the perfect acoustics heard wherever The Who play. The Who are a great group, but they also have (and need) this great roadie. **J HUBBARD, Hull, Yorks (MM Mar 7)**



JAGGER AND THE AUSSIES
—THE TRUTH
TOP POP NEWS
Clodagh • Tuli in U.S.
Reeves • Joe Dolan
Why Beatles went for Billy

Engelbert

I'm a better man
his greatest yet!

Virgin **FBS** **DECCA**

1970

APRIL — JUNE

**ELTON JOHN, PINK
FLOYD, SYD BARRETT,
THE KINKS AND MORE**





Polythene plan: fans try to stay dry at the Bath Festival Of Blues & Progressive Music, June 25-28, 1970, Bath & West Showground, Shepton Mallet

"I always bring the rain with me"

MM JULY 4 So says Dr John, who does just that for the Bath Festival, featuring himself, Led Zep, Canned Heat and more.

POWERFUL MAGICAL FORCES seemed to be at work when Dr John The Nite Tripper arrived in Britain last week for his Bath day. A somewhat incoherent gent, he proved a friendly cove, however, and claimed, "I always bring the rain with me."

Right! – In a few hours a heatwave and days of sunshine were replaced by black storm clouds and frequent downpours, as the Doc shook a grinning skull at the heavens. He shared a voodoo chant with Aynsley Dunbar, now drummer with The Mothers Of Invention, and MM's Chris Welch, known as The Grinning Fool wherever witch doctors meet. They were in conference on the power of the sea at Clymping-On-Sea, Sussex until rain stopped spells.

Videotape of the Bath Festival will be shown by TVX at London's Arts Lab in 1 Robert Street, NW1 today (Thursday), Friday, Saturday and Sunday from 8pm. »

1970

APRIL - JUNE

Q: Is Lennon/McCartney still a partnership? A: "No"

NME APRIL 18 His solo debut is out, so Paul McCartney interviews himself – and breaks up The Beatles.

PAUL MCCARTNEY SPEAKS... or rather sends out his words via a printed sheet which we reproduce below, just as he sent it out. That way we cannot get anything wrong, something Paul accuses the press of doing from time to time! Paul has used the time-honoured NME Question-Time format to put his message over, writing the questions and giving the answers himself.

You'll find what he thinks of Lennon; and Allen Klein; how he made his new album; who gets the composing credits; if he missed other Beatles and George Martin on the sessions; and what he wants to do in the future. Here is what he has to say...

QUESTION: Why did you decide to make a solo album?

ANSWER: Because I got a Studer four-track recording machine at home – practised on it (playing all instruments) – liked the result, and decided to make it into an album.

Q: Were you influenced by John's adventures with the Plastic Ono Band and Ringo's solo LP? A: Sort of but not really.

Q: Are all the songs by Paul McCartney alone? A: Yes sir.

Q: Will they be so credited: McCartney? A: It's a bit daft for them to be Lennon/McCartney credited, so "McCartney" it is.

Q: Did you enjoy working as a solo? A: Very much. I only had me to ask for a decision, and I agreed with me. Remember Linda's on it too, so it's really a double act.

Q: What is Linda's contribution? A: Strictly speaking she harmonises, but of course, it's more than that because she is a shoulder to lean on, a second opinion, and a photographer of renown. More than all this, she believes in me – constantly.

Q: Where was the album recorded? A: At home, at EMI (No 2 studio) and at Morgan Studios (WILLESDEN!)

Q: What is your home equipment? (in some detail).

A: Studer four-track machine. I only had, however, one mic, and, as Mr Pender, Mr Sweatenham and others only managed to take six months or so (slight delay) I worked without VU meters or a mixer, which meant that everything had to be listened to first (for distortion, etc...) then recorded. So the Answer: STUDER. ONE MIC. And nerve.

Q: Why did you choose to work in the studios you chose? A: They were available. EMI is technically good, and Morgan is cosy.

Q: The album was not known about until it was nearly completed. Was this deliberate? A: Yes, because normally an album is old before it comes out. (Aside) Witness *Get Back*.

Q: Why? A: I've always wanted to buy a Beatles album like "people" do and be as surprised as they must be. So this was the next best thing. Linda and I are the only two who will be sick of it by the release date. We love it really.

Q: Are you able to describe the texture or feel or the theme of the album in a few words? A: Home, Family, Love.

Q: How long did it take to complete – from when to when?

A: From just before (I think) Xmas, until now. "The Lovely Linda" was the first thing I recorded at home, and was originally to test the equipment. That was around Xmas.

Q: Assuming all the songs are new to the public, how new are they to you? Are they recent? A: One was 1959 ("Hot As Sun"). Two from India, "Junk", "Teddy Boy", and the rest are pretty recent. "Valentine Day", "Mommma Miss America" and "Oo You" were ad-libbed on the spot.

Q: Which instruments have you played on the album? A: Bass, drums, acoustic guitar, lead guitar, piano and organ-

mellotron, toy xylophone, bow and arrow.

Q: Have you played all these instruments

on earlier recordings? A: Yes, drums being the one that I wouldn't normally do.

Q: Why did you do all the instruments yourself? A: I think I'm pretty good.

Q: Will Linda be heard on all future records? A: Could be; we love singing together, and have plenty of opportunity for practice.

Q: Will Paul and Linda become a John and Yoko? A: No, they will become Paul and Linda.

Q: Are you pleased with your work? A: Yes.

Q: Will the other Beatles receive the first copies? A: Wait and see.

Q: What has recording along taught you? A: That to make your own decisions about what you do is easy, and playing with yourself is difficult, but satisfying.

Q: Who has done the artwork? A: Linda has taken all the photos, and she and I designed the package.

Q: Is it true that neither Allen Klein nor ABKCO have been nor will be in any way involved with the production, manufacturing, distribution or promotion of this new album? A: Not if I can help it.

Q: Did you miss the other Beatles and George Martin? Was there a moment, eg, when you thought: "Wish Ringo was here for this break?" A: No.

Q: Assuming this is a very big album, will you do another? A: Even if it isn't, I will continue to do what I want – when I want to.

Q: Are you planning a new album or single with The Beatles? A: No.

Q: Is this album a rest away from Beatles, or start of solo career? A: Time will tell. Being a solo album means it's "the start of a solo career"... and not being done



"Is the break permanent? I don't know"

QUESTION-TIME WITH PAUL

CONDUCTED BY PAUL!!

No more songs with John

sends out his produce below, t get anything of doing from

fluenced by John's Plastic Ono Band, and



with The Beatles means it's a rest. So, it's both.

Q: Is your break with The Beatles temporary or permanent; due to personal differences or musical ones? A: Personal differences, business differences, musical differences, but most of all because I have a better time with my family. Temporary or permanent? I don't know.

Q: Do you foresee a time when Lennon-McCartney becomes an active songwriting partnership again? A: No.

Q: Does it please you to hear views on John's possible band names? The Plastic Ono Band? Giving Back The MBE? Yoko's Influence? Yoko? A: I love John and respect what he does – it doesn't give me any pleasure.

Q: Were any of the songs on the album originally written with The Beatles in mind? A: The older ones were. "Junk" was intended for *Abbey Road*, but something happened. "Teddy Boy" was for *Get Back* but something happened.

Q: Were you pleased with *Abbey Road*? Was it musically restricting? A: It was a good album (No 1 for a long time).

Q: What is your relationship with Klein? A: It isn't. I am not in contact with him, and he does not represent me in ANY way.

Q: What is your relationship with Apple? A: It is the office of a company which I part own with the other three Beatles. I don't go there because I don't like offices or businesses, especially when I'm on holiday.

Q: Have you any plans to set up an Independent Production Company? A: McCartney Productions.

Q: What sort of music has influenced you on this album? A: Light and loose.

Q: Are you writing more prolifically now? Or less so? A: About the same. I have a queue waiting to be recorded.

Q: What are your plans now? A holiday? A musical? A movie? Retirement? A: My only plan is to grow up.



Brinsley Schwarz:
(l-r) Billy Rankin,
Bob Andrews, Nick
Lowe, Brinsley
Schwarz, Ian Gomm

“Hype doesn’t worry us”

MM APRIL 17 Brinsley Schwarz spend £30,000 flying the press to NYC to witness their show at the Fillmore East. “We weren’t screaming with paranoia,” they say.

BRINSLEY SCHWARZ, THE band born out of the small-time frustrations of the Kippington Lodge band, are the outfit the whole of the rock media were taken to see in New York last weekend. Because of the expense involved in the whole junket, both the band and Famepushers, the company behind the £30,000 promotion, have been accused of perpetrating the biggest hype of all time. It's an accusation to which the group themselves plead not guilty, as Brinsley Schwarz, leader of the group since its inception, explained after their Fillmore experience.

“What we’ve done, or what the management have done, is to put us at a gig and say, ‘Come and see this band.’ All they’ve done is by the nature of the gig, and the nature of the whole junket ensured we’d get the maximum of coverage, which is what promotion is all about. Everybody is bound to say that it’s a hype, but it doesn’t worry us in the least. It would be a hype had we really flopped at the Fillmore, but we really enjoyed the whole thing. American audiences are really weird compared with English audiences, because they groove on completely different things, but it went well.

“All the pressures were on us that first time and none whatsoever the second time. We weren’t screaming with paranoia, but naturally it affected the play the first time, but after we’d finished we thought it’s over, it’s finished, let’s go out and get it together, and it went better.”

The group had problems even before that first gig, at the Fillmore. They couldn’t get visas and flew to Toronto first to come into the States that way. It meant that they arrived with only an hour to spare before their opening show.

Brinsley Schwarz were on the same Fillmore bill as Van Morrison and Quicksilver Messenger Service, who feature pianist Nicky Hopkins who worked with the group when they were still known

as Kippington Lodge. “Nicky has been on our sessions. The first two records we did were your actual session musicians-but-don’t-tell-anyone. We were a pop group called Kippington Lodge for about two years and we had about five singles out and we had all the promises of being pop stars. It got to the stage where we just wanted to be cut off from all that when we saw this little ad in *Melody Maker* which said ‘Young Progressive Management require Young Progressive Group’ and we thought why not? For about six months we’d been earning between three and five pounds each a week, so we didn’t have anything to lose.”

The group – Bob Andrews (organ), Bill Rankin (drums), Nick Lowe (bass) and Brinsley – started writing their own material a year ago. They’d listened to jazz-rock outfits like Chicago and country-rock bands like Area Code 615, James Gang, Allman Brothers and The Band. “We started off with the aim of doing country-rock and then gradually realised that because of our individual styles it was going somewhere else. Bob the organist obviously has a more jazz influence than anything else, which has really brought the organ

into the fore, but then again he’s not a jazz-oriented organist. I think because Nicky writes all the songs and they each have a different feel, it’s impossible to say exactly what we play.”

The British public will be given a chance to hear Brinsley in concert. The group hope to make their first appearance at the Albert Hall, either on their own or with one or two big name bands, before starting a British tour.

Whatever the criticisms of their musical ability, Brinsley Schwarz have overnight reached a stage which takes many rock bands twice as long to attain. They have got to American and British publics alike through one performance. From here on in it’s all down to the music.

Royston Eldridge

“It would be a hype had we really flopped at the Fillmore”



“I hate the showbiz thing”

— MELODY MAKER APRIL 17 —

GETTING MY WEEKLY shot of masochism heavily disguised as *Top Of The Pops* as week or two back, something happened which managed to drag my thoughts away from the low-angle shots up the dollies' skirts and stopped me reciting the usual litany of “rubbish... banal... trite codswallop”.

The something was a slight youth seated at a grand piano singing and playing an amazing God Rock ballad which quite put the insipid “Let It Be” into true perspective. The song was called “The Border Song” and the singer was Elton John, known mainly for his previous songs “Skyline Pigeon” and “Lady Samantha”.

He's rapidly becoming a name in his own right, but many will remember him as the chubby organist with that underrated soul band Bluesology a few years ago. In the band with him were altoist Elton Dean and cornetist Mark Charig, both now with Keith Tippett and the Soft Machine, and many others whose faces are now rather better known than they were then.

Elton studied piano in his youth, and joined Mills Music as a tea boy three weeks before he was due to take his A-levels. Then came four years with Bluesology, during which they did the usual round of clubs up and down the country, often backing American soul artists.

“We used to work for Roy Tempest,” says Elton, “backing his artists. I remember that we once did four gigs in a day, and we never thought anything of it. That was with Billy Stewart, who was a great guy. I shudder to think of that now, and we didn't even have a roadie then. Groups today don't know how lucky they are!”

He left the band for a variety of reasons: he was fed up with the soul format, the band wouldn't let him sing, and “I wasn't a very competent organist anyway”. Not knowing quite what he wanted to do, he answered an advertisement asking for young talent. That got him together with Bernie Taupin, who now writes the lyrics to Elton's tunes.

“We really bombed out to start with. It was terrible, but eventually we ended up at Dick James Music, and we're still there. That was nearly three years ago, and the first thing we did was to write and record a complete demo album of songs we thought would be commercial.

“We were pretty pleased with it, but nothing happened and eventually Steve Brown, who joined DJM from EMI, came in and told »

1970 brings a breakthrough for **ELTON JOHN**, a hard-working former sessioneer. Acclaimed albums. Hit singles. “Pandemonium” on his American debut. It's enough to turn a young man's head. He's even got a gold lamé suit, he confesses. “I might have sausages sewn on it!”



Elton John in
1970: "I know
how good I am,
and what I'm
capable of"

1970

APRIL – JUNE

us how awful it was. That was when I made up my mind to write what I really felt and not to manufacture songs I didn't feel. So practically the first thing I did after that was to write 'Skyline' and 'Samantha', and we've been writing for ourselves ever since."

The result, apart from Elton's own recordings, has been that his songs have been recorded by Spooky Tooth, Three Dog Night, Toe Fat and many others. In New Zealand and Italy their songs have been big hits when covered by local artists. "At that time I wanted to be someone like Leonard Cohen, who could disappear for long periods, surface with an album, and then disappear again. I'm financially secure because of all the sessions I've done and still do, so it's not impossible.

"Bernie always writes the words of a song first and then gives them to me and I write the tune. It always works perfectly, and I think we gain from doing it that way. I can't write lyrics, and I know what Bernie wants, so it always comes out right. We don't write a lot... it generally comes in spasms, when we feel like it.

"I don't really want to be labelled as a songwriter, because people would immediately put us in the same bag as Tony Macaulay and Bacharach & David. That's not to put them down in any way; it's

just not what I want. Bluesology would never let me sing, so I only really started when we were doing the first demos, and my voice improved – I hope – as I did more and more.

"I don't really have any conscious influences, but I listen to a lot of music and there are so many people that I admire and who must have an effect on me... The Band, Van Morrison, Neil Young... people like Zappa and Jagger, who don't give a s---. Zappa – well, I don't believe he exists, and Jagger is the most underrated lyricist. If I could write lyrics I'd want to do it like Jagger, and on our albums we always dedicate one track to the Stones. They're my favourite band – on record, anyway, because they don't get it together at all on stage."

Elton has been booked to appear at the Pop Proms in the Roundhouse on April 21, and is currently finding a bass player and drummer to accompany him. "I hope to get Dean Murray, who was Spencer Davis' last bassist, but I can't say about the drums yet. I'd really like to do a couple of gigs a week, because that's how you sell yourself to people. *Top Of The Pops* doesn't really give anybody an idea of what you can do... in fact it gives them a totally wrong impression." *Richard Williams*

All sorts of influence

MM APRIL/OCT Elton's 1970 albums assessed.

Elton John **Elton John** DJM

It's nice to see Cat Stevens and Elton John providing the British answer to Neil Young and Van Morrison. And make no mistake; Elton is up in that class. This is his second album, and is considerably meatier and more substantial than the first. He and Bernie Taupin craft superb songs, strong in every department (words, music, sounds), and Paul Buckmaster's sumptuous arrangements and Gus Dudgeon's brilliant production help the result almost beyond words.

If Elton has a fault, it's that he sometimes sounds rather too much like Feliciano in the way he turns and ornaments phrases, but once you get past that its beauty all the way. The rhythm section is as solid as can be, the strings are used discreetly and imaginatively, and it must be significant that "The Border Song", his current single, is not among the best tracks. My own favourites are "The King Is Dead", an atmospheric piece with a hair-raising finale, and "Sixty Years On", which features delicious Spanish guitar by Colin Green. A truly great record. *Richard Williams, MM Apr 25*

Elton John
Tumbleweed Connection DJM

If "Take Me To The Pilot" was your favourite cut from Elton John's last album, then *Tumbleweed Connection* is sure to be your favourite Elton John album. For most of the way it has Elton proving that he's Mr Superfunk, and he succeeds better than people like Cocker and the Bramletts because he's funky without copping off black music exclusively; there are all sorts of influence at work in his music.

Whereas the last album dealt mainly in "down" atmosphere, the new one rocks and rolls a lot, with plenty of machine-gun piano and gospel choruses. It begins with "Ballad Of A Well Known Gun", a stomper with good guitar, soul chorus and typical Nigel Olsson drums, right on top of the beat but giving the impression of laying back. "Country Comfort" is the official version of the song Rod Stewart did on *Gasoline Alley*, and Elton's has prettier harmonies on the chorus. "Love Song", by Lesley Duncan, is a little too much of CSNY to convince; "Amoreena" is a great superfunk again, with insanely tumbling piano, in contrast to 'Talking Old Soldiers', which features Elton alone at the piano, singing one of Bernie's best lyrics, about the loneliness of old age.

The album ends with "Burn Down The Mission", which begins gently but evolves into the all-time tear-up. Paul Buckmaster and Gus Dudgeon's arrangements top off a finely executed project, and if I find it a little less intriguing than Elton's last, then maybe that's my problem. *Richard Williams, MM Oct 24*

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— MELODY MAKER SEPTEMBER 26 —

AL KOOPER, TALKING about Elton John's last album: "That album's really got me screwed up. It's just the perfect album, and I carry it around everywhere with me in my briefcase."

Those words pretty well sum up the reaction of many musicians to John, who returned this week from a trip on which he conquered the States almost from scratch in a month flat. Elton is as amazed as anybody by the phenomenal success that greeted him.

"We went over to play the Troubadour in LA, and the money was really bad. Dick James put up the bread for it, because the record company in the States said that the time was right, and Dick must have lost a bomb on it. Before we got the offer to go, I was on the point of packing it all in and joining Jeff Beck, believe it or not. But that fell through, and we went to the States expecting nothing at all.

"From the moment we arrived, it was just pandemonium all the way. The first night at the Troubadour was hype night, with all the record company people and the press, and the first set was incredible and it stayed that way. We got unbelievable reviews – I didn't see one bad one."

The response was so strong that a Los Angeles radio station took a full-page ad in the *LA Free Press* to thank him for coming over. Gordon Lightfoot was there most nights, The Beach Boys and Bread were in a lot, and Quincy Jones brought his entire family down to hear Elton. One of the most rewarding things for Elton was when Leon Russell came in, and was completely knocked out.

"He's my idol as far as piano playing, and there he was sitting in the front row. My legs turned to jelly... I mean, to compare my playing with his is sacrilege. He'd eat me for breakfast. But he said that he wants to record with us, and he told me that he'd written 'Delta Lady' after hearing one of our songs, which was a gas. Really it's worth five million good reviews if someone you respect as a musician comes up and tells you they like what you're doing."

Truly fantastic acclaim, then, but does Elton feel that he's being overrated? "Of course, some of the reviews have been ridiculous. But I know how good I am, and what I'm capable of. You simply can't sit back and believe everything people say about you, or you'd get terrible ego problems. I do believe that we write good songs, but I get embarrassed when people say so."

With Elton to the States went the two members of his band, drummer Nigel Olsson and bass guitarist Dee Murray. They played



"It always comes out right": songwriting partners Bernie Taupin and Elton John in New York City, November 1970



15 gigs in Britain, including the Krumlin Festival, a couple of Implosions, Leeds university, Mothers and the Speakeasy before they went to the States and the response was staggering then. "It's a real band now," says Elton, "and the boys have helped me a lot. It's so tight now, but in a year's time it'll be unbelievable. America did our confidence a lot of good, and I don't ever have to tell them what to do, because we all know what we're doing. There are some songs with very broken rhythms, but they just play them without having it explained to them."

Elton was on the bill at the Troubadour with David Ackles. "He's much bigger over here than he is in America. But it's the same with Tom Paxton and Tim Buckley – they're not so big in their own country as in other countries. But as a whole the kids are much more aware in the States, and there's much less backbiting among the musicians. Over there they all go to each other's houses and play, it's so much more relaxed and tolerant. There's none of the 'Ten Years After are crap' rubbish."

Elton's new LP, due out in mid-October, is "so different from the last one. I wanted to get away from the orchestral thing and one cut is just me and the piano, recorded live. There's a Lesley Duncan song I've always wanted to do, and there's one of ours called 'Burn Down The Mission' which I think is the best thing I've ever recorded. It's all much simpler, much funkier."

For the next fortnight, Elton and his two extremely heavy friends will be recording the music for a new Lewis Gilbert movie, *Friends*. "It'll come out as a soundtrack album, and I think there'll be a single from it, either the title song or 'Michelle's Song'. I don't want them to pull a single off my next proper album – there are no singles on it anyway."

Despite the sombre quality of many of his recorded works, Elton is nothing if not a raver on stage. He's playing a Royal Albert Hall concert with Fotheringay on October 2, and he's planning to wear a gold lamé tail-suit, which was given to him in America. "It's from a '30s Busby Berkeley musical... I might sew some sausages on it for the occasion," he commented cryptically. "The outrageousness is very much a part of me, which is why I admire people like Jagger and Zappa so much. It's not just doing it for the sake of it, and I wouldn't do it every night. It depends on how you're feeling." *Richard Williams*

— MELODY MAKER NOVEMBER 28 —

SURELY ONE OF the highest accolades in rock music must be a request to write a song for The Band. It's like being asked to lead the Ferrari Formula One team or displacing Pelé in the Brazilian XI. And it's happened to Elton John.

Elton is currently in the middle of a long American tour, his second, and he's being received with the standing ovations which have greeted his

"If I could write lyrics I'd want to do it like Jagger"

Naturally, Elton is in "incredibly high spirits". He went to the States first for a holiday before starting concerts, and he's met a lot of influential people, all of whom have, to say the least, enthused about his work. Al Kooper, for instance, who described his second album as "the perfect record" in the *MM* recently, went up to Boston to see them, and hired a limousine to take them out for the day.

Leon Russell wants a song from them to complete his next album, but Elton and Bernie haven't had much time to compose, although their management bought an electric piano for Elton to lug round hotels with him. "I've never written anything specifically for another singer before," he says, "and we're playing the Fillmore East tonight with Leon. He's hurt his ribs so he's a bit immobile, but he's got a good band with a couple of chick singers. We're planning to do a thing in which we do our respective acts and then I go on stage and we play the piano together."

Their second album has sold close on a quarter of a million copies in the States, and will have a Gold album award by the end of the year. Thousands of British copies of the first album *Empty Sky* are still being imported and *Tumbleweed Connection*, released in Britain this week, will be delayed until January for the American market. They also made a little bit of history by doing a live radio show in New York, the first time it's been done for ages.

"We recorded it in eight-track stereo, and we should get a good live album out of it. Mind you, it went over the air in good two-track, so there were probably millions of people sitting at home taping it for bootlegs. But it's a fantastic tape, the best playing we've ever done."

In Santa Monica their performance was recorded for television, partly for a Henry Mancini spectacular and partly for a 30-minute *Elton John Show*, which will be shown in the States soon and sold all over the world.

"We played for nearly two hours there," Elton remembers. "We seem to go on longer in America than in Britain, because the audiences are so incredible. They don't vary at all, and since we played the Troubadour in LA on the first trip we've had a standing ovation at every gig, including the ones in England in-between."

"San Francisco audiences are a little cool at first, like those in London, because they've seen everything, and one night it was like pushing over a brick wall very slowly, but they went in the end. Los Angeles is like home for us, and Philly and Boston are great too. Every audience is good if you get at them the right way."

"There's one thing, though – I'm a bit homesick. We don't seem to have seen England at all this year, and I'm looking forward to getting home on December 12. But even so, we haven't got a free day right through January, February and March." *Richard Williams* •

After the commercial disappointment of *Arthur*, **THE KINKS** deliver the massive hit single “Lola” and a new album – about the music industry. Having been spurned by England, they spend much of the year wowing America with a new piano player, John The Baptist.

“The story of this business”

— MELODY MAKER JUNE 6 —

CHRIS WELCH, WHO likes football about as much as the Kremlin digs incense, would never understand it – but Ray Davies flew 3,000 miles for a game of soccer that didn't even happen. Kink Ray, in the middle of the group's third tour of America in six months, took time out last week to jet into London Airport. “I wanted to get a connection to Jersey, where I hoped to play in a charity match,” says Ray. “But I couldn't get a flight. So I just sat at the airport for two hours. Then I went to sleep.”

Twelve hours later, he was on his way back to the States. Actually, the trip wasn't entirely for the football. Ray also took time to balance the tapes of his forthcoming single. It's another Davies composition, titled “Lola”. Ask Ray if the title was inspired by any person, and he replies mysteriously, “Just hear it, man.” But he did add that it was a “slow rock'n'roll number”. It was made specifically as a single, but it will be included on the next Kinks album. Naturally, Ray is hoping for a hit, as the last Kinks single to hit the chart was “Days” and that was some one-and-a-half years ago.

Did he feel that the group's absence from Britain had hampered their hit-making potential? “It's possible. It always helps if you're playing dates in the country when a single is released.” Why, then, spend so much time in the States? “They seem to appreciate us there a lot,” says Ray. “The place is so vast; we haven't played all major cities yet. But »

GETTY

“We haven't played London for about three years”: Ray Davies photographed on January 29, 1970



audiences definitely like us. They seemed to appreciate our *Arthur* album more than Britain.”

Unlike some groups who seem to spend more time in the recording studios than on the road, The Kinks are happiest when they are appearing before live audiences. “We like to play. That’s what a group is all about,” says Ray. “I don’t think it’s a very good policy not to be out playing. There’s nothing like playing for an audience. I can’t exactly say why the Americans appreciate us so much. It’s just a fact, that’s all. We haven’t toured America for three-and-a-half years; now we’re doing our third tour in six months.

“After the tour, which ends in about six weeks, we plan to play London – dates in two nice places. But nothing as grand as the Festival Hall. We haven’t played London for about three years.

“We do get requests from a lot of fans to play dates in Britain, and I think there is a little danger in being away too much. People tend to forget about you. They like to be able to see you on tour. It must help record sales. At present, I’m trying to do as much to promote ‘Lola’ as I can.”

A piano had been added to the group for the American tour. “It helps when we do numbers from the albums on stage,” he added. “We may add a piano when we play in London. Usually if any piano is played, it’s by me. But I find it a bit restricting.”

One instrument Ray won’t be adding to the Kinks lineup is an organ. “I don’t like organs,” he says firmly. “They’re too stodgy.”

Some while ago, Ray was reported to be writing a book. Eversince, Kinks admirers have been asking when it would appear. “I’m still working on it,” he said. “But you know how it is when you start writing a book. You keep making changes. Then when you come back to it, you make more changes.”

But Ray promises one thing: he will definitely write that book. Even though it is going to take time. And time certainly presses when a man can’t even get a game of football. *Laurie Henshaw*

— NME JULY 11 —

THE KINKS SPENT a long time in the British hit wilderness – “Days” was the group’s last decent hit exactly two years ago when it reached No 14 – and Dave Davies at least hopes that “Lola” will enable the group to work more in England. At present, The Kinks are barnstorming America and Canada with a series of concerts that are mostly sell-outs and are producing what used to be called fan-mania.

Dave flew back to London this week during a break from the tour and explained, “When you’re not working you don’t miss it, but when you get the fans yelling again you like it. I enjoy playing, myself.”

Dave is keen to play in Britain again, although he thinks the Kinks will only do an average of two gigs a week. “We haven’t worked here for quite a while. The actual working things slowed down quite a bit for everyone.”

“Lola” has provided the Kinks with a much-needed hit, and while it bears a resemblance to other Ray Davies songs only in that it tells a story, Dave commented, “All his songs wander on about their own ego. His songs are down to earth and involved with reality. People can attach themselves to that rather than to songs people write about themselves.”

The Kinks recorded “Lola” about two months ago, but Ray, the man you can’t understand unless you happen to be Ray, hasn’t told anyone what made him write it in the first place. “There may be a story behind it, but he hasn’t told us,” Dave admitted. “It’s not someone in the group. I don’t



The Kinks on July 21, 1970: (l-r) John “The Baptist” Gosling, Mick Avory, John Dalton, Dave and Ray Davies

know who he was actually directing it at, probably someone he met.” He let out one of his frequent high-pitched chuckles. Maybe that implied more than he was letting on.

Dave flew back to America yesterday (Thursday) to get on with the rest of the tour, which he says is being split up into parts. “It’s scheduled to finish on Monday, and then we’re coming back for three weeks, after which we’ll probably go back to America again,” he told me in his manager’s Mayfair offices one sweltering London day when most people were feeling lethargic, but when Dave seemed singularly keen to get down to some serious work.

“The reaction in America is really good. It’s fantastic. We played in Canada, where we’d never been before, and in Vancouver the people almost tore the place apart. Some people went there out of loyalty and some out of curiosity. The people in one town in America didn’t know what to expect. I think they expected us to arrive in suits and be very, very smart people. They were quite surprised to find we weren’t. A lot of people thought we didn’t exist.”

Those of us who have met solely Dave will testify to the undeniable fact that The Kinks are very much alive and well and living in an amalgam of changing emotions – most of them Ray’s. Knowing Ray, I don’t expect having another hit here will make him any different to his usual self. And it is this effect that he seems to have on the others that virtually dictates The Kinks’ moods, if not their careers as well.

A hit record apart, The Kinks’ music is satisfying them a lot more than in the past. As Dave explained, “During the last six months, we’ve been working a lot better together. Musically we’re a lot more together. Ray’s writing a lot better now; it goes through phases, like everything, and this looks like being the beginning of a big thing again for us.”

Maybe it has something to do with the inclusion of pianist John Gosling, who reminds me of a Roy Wood with shades. “Our manager, Grenville, met him. He was a music teacher or something,” Dave said. “We’ve christened him John The Baptist ‘cos that’s what we think John The Baptist looked like.”

In America, The Kinks sell a lot more albums than they do singles, according to Dave, and they need to get another LP out over there as soon as possible. “We’ll start work on that as soon as we’re back,” Dave said. “We’ve got a couple of tracks in the can, but we want to do a possible follow-up to ‘Lola’. We don’t go into the studios for a week and get enough stuff to last us a year.”

And with that he was gone. Off on some errand to do with work and, hopefully, keeping The Kinks back in the charts where their residency came close to being terminated with a fans’ notice to quit. “Lola” has paid the rent up, so they look to be around for a while yet. *Richard Green*

— NME AUGUST 25 —

WITH “LOLA” HAVING reached No 1 in the *NME* chart, it would be natural to expect to see Dave Davies jumping with joy and generally feeling pleased with himself, but this isn’t exactly the case. Though he is pretty happy about the record’s success, he is more concerned with the fate of earlier Kinks releases.

The failure of the album *Arthur* and the single taken from it, ‘Shangri-La’, puzzles him, and he conducted an inquest into the non-event when we met last week. He arrived hotfoot from a recording session in darkest Willesden to take a drink in Soho – not cherry cola, by the way.

In reply to my question about a follow-up to “Lola”, Dave said, “We don’t really think in terms of follow-ups, we haven’t for some time now. We’ve had some good records out and they just haven’t made it, so we’ve got to the stage where we release the best thing we have and hope it’ll sell.

“Do you remember ‘Shangri-La’? I think it was the best single we ever did, but it was a miss. And ‘Wonder Boy’ – that was another good one that got nowhere. I haven’t any idea why; if we knew why records flop we’d make hits all the time. I suppose ‘Lola’ did well because people can dance to it and the story’s a bit unusual.”

And of *Arthur*, Dave commented, “I was disappointed that it didn’t make it. We all thought it was a good album. The next one won’t follow a complete theme like that one did, but there will be something to link all the songs. I don’t want to say too much about it in case people steal the idea.

“When we told people about doing a pop opera, a couple of small groups did one, and then when *Arthur* came out, we got accused of jumping on the bandwagon though it was our idea in the first place.”

Having just returned from an American tour which proved to The Kinks that they still have a lot of fans and that their music is appreciated, the group is feeling more confident than for some time.

“We’re going to work more here now, but mainly places like universities,” Dave revealed. “We’ve got a new act and we’re playing music that we like personally. We’ve done a few dates and the reaction has been good. If we got a poor reception for three nights I’d feel like leaving off for a couple of weeks and thinking about it.”

Before he left, I asked what would have happened if “Lola” had been a miss and he admitted, “I suppose we’d have gone on making records for another year or so and then drifted apart.”

A few weeks ago, Pye hosted a reception for The Kinks to celebrate the success of “Lola” and welcome them home from their tour. Surprisingly, they all turned up (quite a feat if you know their habits) and I spoke to John Dalton, who was laughing and joking with a waitress.

He too had a word to say about *Arthur*, agreeing with what Dave was to tell me later.

“We got lots of people thinking we were copying The Who because they’d had *Tommy* out, but the thing was, Ray had been writing it for two years before it was recorded, so we can hardly be accused of copying,” he explained reasonably.

How did he find the American trip?

“Oh, well, it’s OK in some places, but there’s a lot of travelling to be done,” he told me. “But the crowds have been so fantastic that I don’t really mind.”

He’s looking forward to the next album, which will probably be a double set, and hopes that “Lola” will tend to make people listen to the LP. That’s what The Kinks are really after now – album chart success.

Richard Green

— MELODY MAKER DECEMBER 5 —

RAY DAVIES OF The Kinks and Britain was watching *The Lucille Ball Show*. It was just after 3am in Los Angeles. In another half-hour it would be *The Adventures Of The Cisco Kid*, time enough for a few words on the transatlantic line. The Kinks are at present in the middle of their fourth

“I can’t exactly say why the Americans appreciate us so much”

American tour this year. “It’s still as great as ever it always is to me,” said Ray. “We decided to stop over in Hollywood for a couple of days before we move to Colorado and then Illinois. The tour is going down tremendously well. We’ve done the West, and now we’re working over towards the East.”

I asked Ray if he noticed any change in audience between coasts. “No, not visibly, but it’s such a damned big country that you can trip across into states where they have still never heard of you, although Kinks are becoming known throughout each state now. How did Henry Cooper get on? Great, it’s really p—— down with rain here.”

With the new Kinks album, *Lola Versus Powerman And The Moneygoround*, on the verge of release, I asked Ray what he thought of the album. Were the references to *Melody Maker* and other items from the pop business a deliberate dig at the music world?

“Well, you were after me for an interview at the time of recording. The album is not really meant to be a dig. It’s more a story about some of the things that happen in this business. I don’t think people are aware of what really goes on, especially on the business side. The album, I suppose, tells the tale of us on two planes – one as businessmen, the other as people.”

What stage did Ray think The Kinks were at now? “I don’t know, I just don’t know. I’d be able to answer that when I look back at the album in maybe a year’s time. I mean we’ve just done the soundtrack to the film *Percy*. It was a nice thing to do.”

... *Moneygoround* isn’t a wild change in the Kinks sound; in fact, on tracks like “Top Of The Pops” it virtually went back to the chunkiness of “You Really Got Me”.

Did Ray think that The Kinks were progressing at all musically? “Not much, not much at all. But let’s put it this way: I wouldn’t have written a track like ‘Top Of The Pops’ two years ago; it was deliberately meant to be chunky, and in that style. It ain’t progressive or anything like that. What I think we have achieved during the year is dwelling more on lyrics, and not musical progression.”

How did Ray look upon the progression in today’s music? “I see it from here in America as lots of people sitting in their own little cubicles, making their own records for themselves. To me everybody looks like, and acts like, an individual.

“A couple of years ago you had unknown bands pumping out other people’s material; now we have many unknowns doing completely their own stuff. I think that’s only for the good.”

What was in line for The Kinks in the near future? “I don’t know – at the moment it’s just to finish this tour. We’ve actually started work on another album, which I feel may possibly come over as a big change. It will be an extension of the last; it’s coming off well at the moment.

“Actually, this tour is just settling down now. We follow quite a general pattern on tour. For the first couple of weeks we don’t talk to each other; now Dave’s finally getting round to talking to me, and me to him – so

we’ve got over that period. It’s like being in the army, I think, although I don’t really know what the army’s like – but I imagine it must be like this.”

With four tours in the States this year, did Ray feel they were neglecting Britain?

“No, not at all. There just aren’t enough places to play in England – it’s as simple as that. I’d like to do a concert as soon as we come back from the States. It doesn’t pay off to have a rest after a tour of America. I mean, you’re into playing, so you should carry it on. Maybe England, Germany and Europe would be OK.”

Roy Hollingworth •



How the West was won —by the Kinks

RAY DAVIES of the Kinks and Britain was watching *The Lucille Ball Show*. It was just after 3 a.m. in Los Angeles. In another half-hour it would be *The Adventures of the Cisco Kid*, time enough for a few words on the transatlantic line.

Kinks are at present

and then Illinois. The tour is going down tremendously well. We've done the West, and now we're working

Ray Davies reports on the

the *Moneygoround* on the verge of release. I asked Ray what he thought of the album. Were the references to *Melody Maker* and other items from the pop business a deliberate dig at the music world?

planes — one as businessmen the other as people." What stage did Ray think the Kinks were at now? "I don't know, I just don't know. I'd be able to answer that when I look back at the album in maybe a year's time. I mean we've just done the soundtrack to the film *Percy*.

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"Is this the A-side?"

MM MAY 16 Roger Daltrey picks the winners among the new singles and album tracks.

Aretha Franklin *Let It Be* ATLANTIC

Only one person it could be... and I ain't trying to guess. It's no improvement on The Beatles. It's Aretha Franklin. I heard some of her album tracks recently and they were a lot better than this. The tenor solo was a downer - it just doesn't get off the ground. Not one of her best performances. Can I hear it again? Definitely not a single - it doesn't come up enough.

Free *All Right Now* ISLAND

Are you sure this is the A-side? Ha ha! Good voice, though the tune is a bit meaningless. It sounds like a B-side. Haven't a clue who it is. Liberace? I can't imagine anybody releasing that as an A-side. Let's turn it over. It must be Fleetwood Mac. Oh dear, I'm really not interested and I don't care!

Arrival *I Will Survive* DECCA

The Arrival? It's the sort of group you see on the box. They are refreshing, but definitely not a hit. It just wanders all over the

place. They are good at what they do and have a nice, easy listening image. Can I listen to the B-side? That's better - the chick is a good singer. This is what they are all about. For an English band they have an incredible sound.

Ben E King *Goodbye My Old Girl* CREWE

Jesus Christ - it's Mario Lanza! No thoughts on that one. It'll be a No 1 in the Darby & Joan clubs. I'm not going to ask who it is - I'm not interested. That must be a record company thing where they had to put something out. It may have been alright for 1959, but not for today. I'll play you one of Towshend's new songs to cheer you up!

Mary Johnson *So Glad You Chose Me* TAMLA MOTOWN

Don't like it. It's that Atlantic/Motown soul sound, and definitely not a good song, although he's a good singer. What can you say about a rubbish song? I can't see the guy singing liking it even.

Elvis Presley *Kentucky Rain* RCA

Horrible. Presley, ennit? Nothing much to say about that. I thought he had it in the bag, and he goes back to this kind of stuff. But it will probably be a hit. If he'd put out a good old funky rock'n'roll record I'd buy it.

Ginger Baker's *Air Force* Da Da Man AND Toad

FROM THE LP *AIR FORCE*, POLYDOR
Well it's Air Force. That voice could only be Ginger. Who's on organ - Stevie? Really good. The tracks are really long aren't they? I don't like the recording, even if it is live. I'd have to listen to this for about two hours before I could comment properly. It probably grows on you. I'm not going to say a thing about it unless you want to play it for two hours. I haven't see Air Force yet, but this is definitely an album I'll have to get. One thing - the solos sound like a lot of jazz riffs.

Mountain *Mississippi Queen* AND *Theme For An Imaginary Western*

FROM THE LP *CLIMBING*, BELL
This is nice. It sounds like that Howlin' Wolf electric album. This is a bloody good group. Is it Felix Pappalardi on bass? A dirty sound - it could have been recorded better. Have you heard the Howlin' Wolf album? It's better than this. I'll play you a track. He uses the same



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guitar sound, but gets a much better recording sound. I like that "Mississippi Queen" number.

Stone The Crows *The Touch Of Your Loving Hand* AND *I Saw America*

FROM THE LP *STONE THE CROWS*, POLYDOR

I really like the sound of that electric piano. Simone - it must be. It's not? Jesus! It really sounds like her. Hey that voice sounds like Janis Joplin. Jesus, who is it? Yeah, it's good. Archie Andrews? It sounds like an American record, but I dare say it's English. Not Bob & Marcia? Well it's nice anyway. She really sounds like Janis. What a good group, I really like it. Yes - the only thing is so many groups are already into this bag. Look, it's nice and sunny in the garden. Are there any more records?

Three Dog Night *Easy To Be Hard* AND *Chest Fever*

FROM THE LP *CAPTURED LIVE AT THE FORUM*, STATESIDE

(Announcer says, "Three Dog Night") I wonder who it is! Ha ha! It's a good live recording. They have never had a hit album here yet, but they are an extremely good band. Although some put them down, I rather like them myself. They are not doing anything different on this from their other albums. "Chest Fever" should be interesting. The only thing I don't like is they are rather over-rehearsed. This has a horrible intro. Hurry up! They sound a bit untogether on this.

Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young *Carry On*

FROM THE LP *DÉJÀ VU*, ATLANTIC

Crosby, Stills & Nash - oh, and Young, of course. What can you say? It's incredible. This is really a big improvement on their last album. This is what albums are all about. They have a completely new approach. This could only be Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young! I hear this album was supposed to cost \$120,000 to produce. They are a super-duper group... what more can I say? You are going to leave this one behind, aren't you? I'll swap you for a Who "live" album!

ROGER DALTREY

reviews the new singles in

Blind Date

"I'm out of my depth!"

MM JUNE 27 Eric Clapton reviews the latest sounds.

Fred McDowell

61 Highway AND **Big Mama**
FROM THE LP *WHEN I LAY MY*
BURDEN DOWN, BIOGRAPH

Is that LP called *I Ain't Gonna Play No Rock And Roll*? Yeah – Fred McDowell. He's fantastic. He's using a slide guitar, probably tuned open, but not down too much. I've never seen him "live" – but I'd love to. I thought it might be Son House for a minute. It sounds like it might be recorded in the '50s. [MM: It was recorded at Fred's home in Mississippi in 1969.] It almost sounds like an electric guitar, doesn't it? He's from Mississippi – great.

Bill Evans and Jim Hall

My Funny Valentine

FROM THE LP *UNDERCURRENT*,
WORLD RECORD CLUB

(Sings along) Are they young musicians? Is it Kenny Burrell? It sounds ageless. I would have thought it's Larry Coryell, but I've no idea, I'll guess Barney Kessel. Tal Farlow. Joe Pass? Who is it? – Jim Hall? You realise I am out of my depth. What do you mean "yes"! I liked this very much. I would have been anti-jazz, a few years ago. It's a special kind of school, and something I wish I could... you know (plays imaginary guitar). Have you got any records by Charlie Christian? This one is beautiful.

Smiley Lewis

Shame, Shame, Shame

FROM THE LP *SHAME, SHAME, SHAME*,
LIBERTY

It's very familiar – Joe Turner? Beautiful – is it Ray Charles' band backing the singer? Who is it? Smiley Lewis? You're kidding. Can I see the cover? Sounds back to the '50s again. When I was first buying records this would have been too jazzy for me. It's not now, but I used to be a purist.



Miles Davis Bitches Brew

FROM THE LP *BITCHES BREW*, CBS

It's either Miles Davis or Dr John! Is this "Bitches Brew"? I like this – no, I haven't heard it before, I've been waiting to hear it. Who's the drummer? Tony Williams? Can I see the cover? I'd like to have a go at playing with Miles – it would be an incredible challenge. But I have tried to back out of it a couple of times, because I don't know if I am up to it. I don't think I'm good enough. It's the kind of music that avoids the obvious, and I've had a few plays like that with Steve when we were forming Blind Faith. We played for five hours at a time – absolute madness.

Canned Heat

That's All Right

Mama FROM THE LP

CANNED HEAT '70

CONCERT, LIBERTY

BB? I'll have to try and guess by the accents – Canned Heat? It's not fair – you're not giving me enough volume. This is a Big Boy Arthur Crudup number – have they given him a credit on the album? That's good. Alan Wilson flattens me the most. This track sounds pretty hairy. Our band will be getting more into the blues on our club dates, I expect. I'm split half down the middle. Half of me is black and half is white. I started out digging Buddy Holly songs, and we'll be

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doing some of his in country fashion. I liked this a lot.

Lord Buckley

The Nazz

FROM THE LP *THE*

BEST OF LORD BUCKLEY, ELEKTRA

Lord Buckley! He's fantastic. It's "The Nazz" – sweet, wailing cats! (Laughs, and remembers the lines) I don't know much about him, but I guess he started all that hip language. "Here comes the Nazz." The blackest white man alive – a lesson in soul.

Dave Mason

Only You Know And I Know FROM THE LP *ALONE*

TOGETHER, BLUE THUMB IMPORT

Yeah (sings along and claps). I've heard it before. It's a great song. Delaney & Bonnie made a record of this you would not believe. I remember Dave making this in LA at the same time I was doing mine. Dave hates the cover – he can't stand it! You're supposed to hang it on the wall. I imagine these are all Dave's songs. He's a great guitarist, singer and writer. I think Tim Hardin has been a great influence on him. It looks like I like everything you play me!

Famous Jug Band

God Knows AND **Farmyard Girl** FROM

THE LP *CHAMELEON*, LIBERTY

They could have limited that guitar a bit more; it's not cutting through enough. Well, that's English, I'll say that. I don't know who it is, but anyone who can strum a guitar is alright with me. Ah, that's not a bass drum, that's a jug. I heard this number on the radio. I know,

it's the Famous Jug Band. [MM: No, it's the Dedicated Me.] I AM right! It's the Famous Jug Band! [MM: Oh, er – sorry.] Jugs Henry won't tell anybody his second name – right? They've got a unique sound, and they are good songs. They've recorded it exactly as they probably play in the from room, which is nice.

Trevor Gordon

The Goodbye Story

FROM THE LP *ALPHABET*, POLYDOR

This is like a more sophisticated version of that other group. Is it The Marbles? Only half of them? The voice reminded me of The Marbles. I remember they used to sound like the Bee Gees. This is too middle-of-the-road. The song is nice, but it should be done in a more convincing way. I couldn't criticise it because I'm sure thousands of people will like this.

Delaney & Bonnie

Free The People

ATLANTIC
Ha ha! No! Yeah – fantastic band. I think it's the Florida musicians backing. This was done at the new Atlantic studios in Florida. Yeah – it should be a hit everywhere. It's a different feeling from their usual records.



DELANEY & BONNIE
AND FRIENDS
FREE THE PEOPLE



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APRIL - JUNE



October 25, 1969: Frank Zappa joins Pink Floyd for "Interstellar Overdrive" at the Actuel Pop & Jazz Festival, Amougies, Belgium



“An incredible feeling of power”

Ballet, touring, wealth, even football cause concern for **PINK FLOYD**. With *Atom Heart Mother* ready to go, Roger Waters discusses the way ahead for the band post-**SYD BARRETT**. Back at the start of the year, Syd himself is optimistic about his new album. “There’s no gloom or depression for me,” he says.

— **MELODY MAKER JUNE 5** —

NICK MASON AND Roger Waters of Pink Floyd always remind me of the deadly duo in *Easy Rider*, except that Roger and Nick are extremely British in their cool lifestyle. Always amusing, well-spoken and together, their aplomb was slightly shaken by the intake of large quantities of ale, forced between their lips by the *MM* this week.

They recently returned from a tour of the States where they achieved considerable success, without causing widespread rioting, and had all their equipment stolen – and rescued – by the FBI. They were both laughing about their memories of the Fats Domino band they chanced upon in a nightclub during their travels, when they entered the *MM* boozier. »

PHOTOSHOT

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APRIL – JUNE

"They had the greatest brass section in the world – until they played together," said Nick.

"And it got better," said Roger, "to the accompaniment of clinking glasses and bottles from the crowd. The band were playing instrumentals in their tuxedos. Then Fats Domino came on and he was great. We found that New Orleans was the worst music scene in the world. It's just full of strip joints and there was no jazz at all, just drunks. All the jazzmen have split.

"We spent about seven weeks in the States and it was a good trip, for what it was meant to achieve in terms of promotion. We did Fillmore in the mid-week – and considering that, the attendance was very good. Generally in the States it's like it was for us here a couple of years ago. But all the audiences said they had never seen anything like us before."

"We got good reviews everywhere," agreed Nick. "And we certainly didn't feel depressed. But we're glad to be back! We're a home-orientated group."

What is their future at home?

"Oh, we'll be recording and boring things like that – you wouldn't want to know about. Let's talk about football. Everybody else does."

There followed a long discourse in which it was agreed the recent burst of football mania was the most intense display of nationalism since 1914. It seemed logical for the conversation to drift back to the States, and said Roger: "We did a concert at the University Of California just after all the campus violence. The administration had closed the school, but we did our concert, which was very nice. It was sad to note that the students had really got themselves organised in readiness for trouble. There were field dressing posts available for casualties."

"Students here attempt to live out a situation that doesn't exist. I feel strongly about English students who wreck debates when they should accept it as a medium of communication."

What happened when all of the group's equipment was stolen?

"That was nearly a total disaster. We sat down at our hotel thinking, 'Well that's it. It's all over.' We were pouring out our troubles to a girl who worked at the hotel and she said her father worked for the FBI. The police hadn't helped us much, but the FBI got to work and four hours later it was found – £15,000 worth. Next time we go back to the States we play at the Lincoln Centre in New York, which is like moving up from UFO to the Albert Hall." *Chris Welch*

— MELODY MAKER SEPTEMBER 26 —

THOSE WHO WRITE about rock music as a serious art form always place themselves in a precarious position: the exponents of this type of music, who are actually working from valid concepts, are so small in number that the rock critic may find himself intellectualising generally in an effort to justify the extent of his own involvement in his subject.

This point is made with particular reference to the Pink Floyd. Excepting The Beatles, no English rock band has been the subject of more learned dissertations on rock than the Floyd. Comparisons have been made between them and Beethoven; their music had been described as a "sustained attempt to harness in sound our crazed, demented, agonised ambitions".

Very often their work has served as the fulcrum of the writer's argument that rock is the only form of contemporary music that is saying anything. This theorising has, in turn, put the band on the defensive about its own merits:

"We are just four musicians playing music, using a lot of things from rock, and then bits from other media," says Richard Wright, their organist. "It is just good and bad music; we do not care about being intellectual."

The truth about their importance to the whole rock scene probably lies midway between these two polarised attitudes. The harmonic repetition of their music, despite its

power and menace and occasional telling brilliance, is a drawback in listening to them from a personal point of view. But who can deny their worth as innovators?

They were the first musicians in England to exploit the visual aid of a light show; the first band to experiment successfully with hi-fi equipment on stage; and the initiators of the free concert here. Their concepts of how contemporary music can be better exploited and presented are unsurpassed. The latest accolade, of course, is their commission by Roland Petit, the French ballet producer, to write for a ballet featuring Nureyev, in which the group will also play with a 108-piece orchestra from June 1 to June 10 at the Grand Palais in the Champs Élysées.

Wright said it was too early yet to talk about what concrete form the ballet would take, but they had several ideas from which they would be working. Improvisation, on which most of their successful music has been founded in the past, would necessarily be curtailed, inasmuch as they would have to work to a score, but the ballet would probably be both more melodic and rhythmic than previous sustained works of theirs.

A greater emphasis on melody, he explained, would also be more evident on their new album, *Atom Heart Mother*, to be released on October 1. The album, one side of which was taped live with an orchestra and choir at their summer Hyde Park concert, is all melodic, apparently, as opposed to *Ummagumma*. "*Ummagumma* had more emphasis on pure sound. This one is much simpler to listen to; it is more emotional, a sort of epic music, in fact, because we have added brass and a choir. This will sell more than the last, I think."

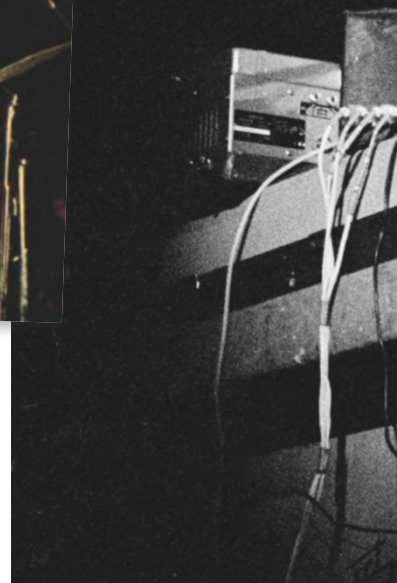
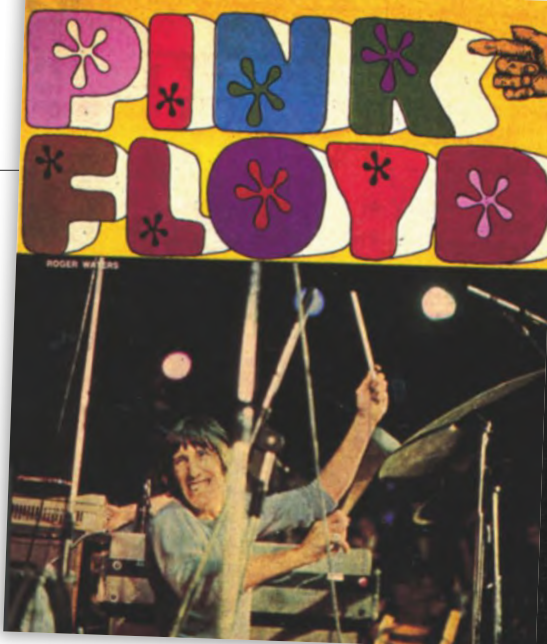
In view of their association with an orchestra, both on the album and for the projected ballet, what was his attitude toward the current attempts to amalgamate rock and the classical approach to music?

"The only way I believe this can work to achieve a valid partnership is for someone to write for the electric guitar, organ, bass and drums as part of the orchestra, and not separately as a rock group playing with an orchestra. It requires someone who can understand all the instruments.

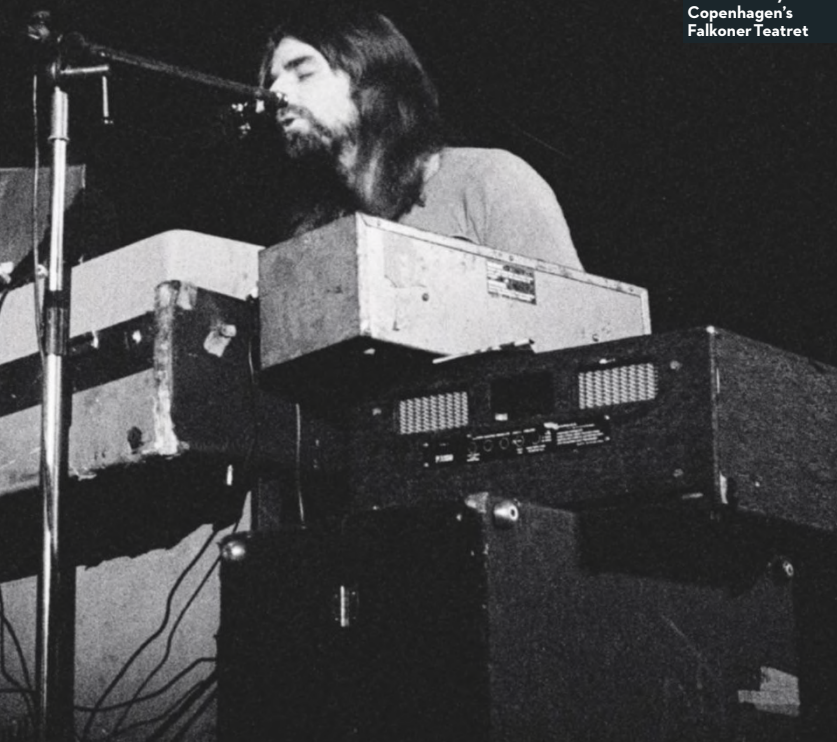
"At present, rock groups and orchestras are performing together, and it does not work at all, because people are trying to combine rock and classical music. The two go together like oil and water. Jon Lord has written for an orchestra, and this was the closest thing so far, but it still did not work. It was very clever; it was an odd mixture of music, a lot of it, that was strongly romantic, but then you had the rock group come in and, crash! He tried and failed, and he will always fail, because he has not got the right approach."

Referring back to the question of their attempts to mix other media in with rock music, Wright agreed that the days of the light show and strobes to make an effective visual point were over. The Floyd were now intent, he said, on producing a much more theatrical show, the embryo of which emerged on their last British concert tour when their performance of "The Journey" included such effects as the appearance in the audience of a man in a gorilla skin.

"We also want to make our own film. We have done three or four film scores in the past [Peter Whitehead's *Tonite Let's All Make Love In London*, the Paul Jones vehicle, *The Committee*, and parts of the background



November 12, 1970:
Rick Wright onstage
with Pink Floyd at
Copenhagen's
Falkoner Teatret



music for Antonioni's *Zabriskie Point*—a score which had been mostly absorbed when the film came out on general release]. We have turned as many offers down, in fact, but there was some definite talk about us doing a film and then writing the music around it.”

The group is still concerned, he said, to get a flawless, hi-fi sound, both on live appearances and on record. *Atom Heart Mother*, parts of which have been written by Ron Geesin, the electronics experimenter, represents an attempt to further this goal.

“We want to really perfect the sound live, and then release it on a four-track tape, and hopefully get EMI to sell four-track tape recorders for home use. This might not be so far in the future as you might think, because in America it is happening now. In terms of playing live on stage, all of us want to get a superb hi-fi sound, although we do not have those thousands of boxes of tricks people fondly imagine we do. Essentially, with us, it is not a question of volume, but of the quality of the sound. Up to now groups have just added equipment to become louder, but they have not tried to get that hi-quality. I don't think The Who, for instance, who get excellent volume, have ever achieved that quality of sound.

“We really feel happy playing at festivals, but I think concerts suit us better because you can never get a good sound at festivals and a lot of people can often not only not hear, but cannot see. The point about festivals is that they are events. If you are a group and you go out on stage and see that number of people, it is an incredible feeling of power—in the sense that it is the audience which is giving out the power.

“Hyde Park, to me, when it started, was a beautiful idea, but promoters are killing off festivals generally because they are finding they do not always make money. We have had a lot of trouble with festival crowds in France, where we were supposed to play at Aix-en-Provence, and the reason these riots develop is that a lot of people believe they should get in for nothing. There is nothing wrong in that—it is good, but only if they can offer a way of paying for the groups. We say, if you want to come in for nothing, you should pass around the hats, because we need the money to live. We cannot afford to play for free all the time.” *Michael Watts*

— MELODY MAKER DECEMBER 5 —

NEW NORTH ROAD is a long, busy thoroughfare stretching from London's Islington to Shoreditch—one of those drab, treeless roads where the heavy lorries and the commercial vans trundle past the bright, faceless laundrettes and the greasy

“In terms of playing live, all of us want to get a superb hi-fi sound”

transport cafes. It's a bit of a depressing area, and one wonders why a pop star like Roger Waters would want to live there. Maybe it's the anonymity of it that appeals to him, the deliberate contrast it presents to all the tinsel and trendiness of the showbiz world. Anyhow, apart from the clean white paint on the outside, there is little to distinguish it from the other Victorian buildings that tire the eyes with their uniformity as one drives down from Shoreditch.

Inside, though, all is modernity, that fashionable Spartan kind, with bare polished wooden floors and the Scandinavian furniture that immediately hits the eye because of its clean, spare lines. Mr Waters used to study architecture and he has got taste, you see. He opens the white front door himself and immediately launches into a monologue about how he has just bought the wrong part for some piece of equipment he is building in his studio.

Incidentally, would we like to see the studio, he interrupts himself? Indeed we would, and he leads the way to the top of his back garden where a garage-cum-tool-shed has been converted for the purpose. Actually, it has not been completely re-done yet, and one half of it is full of the most amazing jumble of objects—bike tyres and tins of paint, dried pods, a pottery kiln and numerous unglazed earthenware vessels, which are there because his wife, who is a teacher, practises pottery.

So back we go to the house, and we sit around the table by the window and talk, while his Burmese cats prowl along the window ledge and stare narrow-eyed at the starlings on the lawn outside. How is the work on the ballet for Roland Petit progressing?

“We haven't started work on it yet.”

But you've got basic ideas for it?

“No. None at all. I'm madly reading all Proust, because that's the basic idea, so they tell me. That's Roland's idea, the choreographer and producer of the thing. It's based on the 20 volumes of his *À La Recherche Du Temps Perdu*. Roland thinks there's some good gear in that, which there undoubtedly is, so very loosely the ballet will be based on certain episodes.”

How difficult do you think it will be for the band to do the score, inasmuch as the Floyd's music does not often have a broad theme, but contains large areas of improvisation?

“You see, they don't really rely to a large extent on improvisation, but I know what you mean. In

fact, it won't necessarily have to be note for note, as long as the timing is the same every night. The melody isn't as important as the timing of the thing, because they all dance to counts, right? I can't see that it should provide any problem, really, because people who play music without reading do it constantly all the time. All rock'n'roll groups do it; it's just that we tend to do it less than most.

“And all this thing about improvisation is a bit of a joke, anyway, because people tend to have certain riffs and phrases and ideas which they use, and they string them together.”

When you first began playing, the music was broadly melodic, what with numbers like “Arnold Layne” and “See Emily Play”, but now the emphasis is on streams of musical consciousness.

“Originally, you see, I wasn't doing anything apart from being a student of architecture and spending money on buying bass guitars, but in terms of music I wasn't doing anything at all.

“‘See Emily Play’ and ‘Arnold Layne’ are Syd Barrett's songs, right, and it wouldn't matter who it was who played the bass or did this or that, it's irrelevant. They're very strong songs



July 18, 1970: Roger Waters and Pink Floyd play a second free concert in Hyde Park two years after the first event there

GETTY (2)

and you just do it, it's nothing to do with music, playing that stuff, it has to do with writing songs, and that was Syd who wrote those songs. I don't think we were doing anything, then, if you see what I mean."

It was Syd Barrett and the Pink Floyd?

"Right. But I wasn't thinking about musical policy in those days – not that I think much about it now. Most of the stuff on the first album was Syd's. The only thing on that album that was much like what the group was going to do later was the thing that we all did together – 'Interstellar Overdrive', which we don't like playing much now."

Are you bored with it? "Yeah, I'm bored with most of the stuff we've done. I'm bored with most of the stuff we play."

Even the new stuff? "Well, there isn't very much new stuff, is there, if you look at it? I'm not bored with doing *Atom Heart Mother* when we get the brass and choir together, because it's so weird doing it. It always comes out as so odd because of the problems of rehearsing musicians; it's like everybody throwing their lump of clay at the wall and seeing what it looks like when it's happened."

"It depends on so many other things as well. It depends on how it mixes, you know, and we're working with this ludicrous situation where we don't have somebody out mixing the sound in the audience, which we obviously ought to. It's ludicrous to mix the PA from the side of the stage when you are mixing brass and a choir and a group. But it would cost a bloody fortune to get it together in another way. But I think we ought to. I'm beginning to come to a position now where I don't think we ought to play any more on a kind of Heath Robinson level – go and do it, play the numbers, do the stuff, get the money and go home."

"We should not go along and play a whole load of numbers, most of them old and some of them new, with things patently wrong, like with some people balancing from the side of the stage."

I think we, and a hell of a lot of other groups, are in a position now to start raising standards a bit, but we don't – well, we haven't but we're always intending to. The reason that they haven't is that the money's there, and people are prepared to spend it on them doing what they're doing now, so they go on schlepping around the country, doing it all, and maybe they get a new and wonderful buzz out of it, communicating with the audience every night, but I don't believe it.

"It's a job, with all the ego-boosting stuff and everything, and I think it becomes very mechanical. I'm going on a 10-day tour tomorrow night – Frankfurt, Vienna and Montreux – but why am I going? To spread the gospel, to make people happy by playing them wonderful music? No, it's not true. I'm going to make bread. I'm going because I'm caught up in the whole pop machinery business and so are the majority."

The band, therefore, does not exist totally for the music? In fact, I understand that at one time you all possessed E-Type Jaguars.

"Yes, but some of us are trying to fight it. I had mine for two months and I've just got a Mini now. But I think there's a great danger in getting into that sports car bit, it's all very, very, very tricky and hard, and we had great arguments in the band about it, because I proclaim vaguely socialist principles, and I sit there spouting a lot of crap about how having a lot of bread worries me – and we are earning a lot of bread now. I couldn't feel happy in an E-Type Jaguar, because it just seems all wrong somehow. I mean, who needs four-point-two litres, and a big shiny bonnet, and whatever else it is!

"I know the answers to all the questions – like, who needs hi-fi and just look at your house, with all the tapestries on the wall. OK, I take the point, but I have all these feelings. I do f—— all about it;

I don't rush around helping people desperately, and I don't give away all my bread to everybody, but the argument we are constantly coming up against is that you can't have the luxury of socialist principles and compassionate feelings about people who are less well off than you are, you can't sincerely have feelings for them, and you can't sincerely feel the system's wrong, and wish there was some kind of socialist system, here and elsewhere, and still have five grand in the bank, or whatever, which is an argument we're constantly having."

Then why don't you give all your bread away, apart from what you needed to make ends meet?

"Because I'm the same as everybody else. Everybody, except for Christ and Gandhi and one or two others, has got the acquisitive instinct to a certain extent. The tragedy of the whole thing is that it's multiplied. The interesting thing is if we are born with it. If we're not born with it, that means that it's foisted upon us by the system and that by the time we grow up and start leaving home, or get pocket money, we have developed it."

"The possibility exists – even if it's only a possibility – that we're not born with it, and that, given a different environment, the kids might grow up into people who get their kicks in another way. I mean, it's impossible in our society, because you're pumped full of personal acquisitions."

Do you intend to intensify the theatrical element in the group's performances?

"This is what I was saying earlier on. I want to stop going out and playing the numbers. I personally would like to stop doing that now, today. I would like to be creating tapes, songs, material writing, and sketches of sets – whatever is necessary to put on a complete theatrical show in a theatre in London... sometime, and see if the people dig it. They may not. They may come on and say, 'Well, it's alright, but it's not rock'n'roll, is it?' They won't do that, because they're all terribly well-spoken

students, all our fans, so they tell me.

"But it's quite possible that the whole thing could fail horribly. I don't think it will. I have great faith in giving the audiences more than music. There is just so much more that you can do to make it a complete experience than watching four long-haired youths leaping up and down beating their banjos. Not that I'm saying that's wrong, but why not try and push yourself a bit further; why just go on doing the same thing night after night? And believe me, groups are bored with it, whether they'll admit it or not. It is boring to them. It's not quite as boring to the audience, because the audience probably only see it once a year." *Michael Watts*

— MELODY MAKER JANUARY 31 —

SYD BARRETT IS a happy, creative, if somewhat confused young man, who gave the Pink Floyd hits and headaches when still in the group of his own creation and after many months of slightly mysterious obscurity, has returned with an extraordinary solo album of odd, eccentric songs. Looking like a younger edition of Patrick

"I spout a lot of crap about how having a lot of bread worries me"

TROUBLED WATERS ...

I'm bored with most

business, and so are the majority. The band, therefore, does not exist totally for the music? In fact, I understand that at one time you all possessed four-point-two litres, and a big shiny bonnet, and whatever else it is!



"Why not try and push yourself a bit further?": (l-r) Roger Waters, Nick Mason, David Gilmour and Rick Wright in 1970



January 23, 1970: Syd Barrett in the office of managers Peter Jenner and Andrew King's Blackhill Enterprises

Moore, Britain's secret weapon in the space race, Syd has gaunt good looks and the same gentle humour common to his old compatriots.

Roger Waters and Dave Gilmour of the Floyd have been helping to reintroduce Syd to the pop world and produced *The Madcap Laughs*, an LP rich in "Octopus"-type songs – which particular track has been released as a single.

In fact many friends have been anxious to help Barrett, who seemed to succumb to the pressures of pop success in more drastic fashion than most. He wrote "See Emily Play" and "Arnold Layne", which were milestones in group history. They symbolised the breakthrough in '67 of the kind of progressive groups called "underground" when the phrase had some meaning.

He has a song writing talent that should not be wasted and a most original lyrical concept. When the Floyd first emerged from UFO and became guests of *Top Of The Pops*, it swiftly became apparent to interviewers earnestly seeking to communicate with their leader that Sydney was not entirely together.

This confusion led him to part from the group nearly two years ago. How is he today? Is he ready to embark on a solo career with all the worries and responsibilities of touring, making appearances and coping with the press? He seemed happy enough to talk this week, and while it was easy enough to detect a mood of mild elation and surprise at the interest being shown in him, it was not always so easy to understand his erratic train of thought. But he was eager to be helpful and I suspect only as confused as he wanted to be. How well was the single doing, I inquired through the clouds of cigarette smoke we blew at each other in his manager's office?

"I haven't noticed," said Syd, pondering but not wholly disturbed. "I don't think it was necessarily a good idea to do a single, but it was done. It's a track off the album. I've spent a long time doing it – since I left the group. But it was done at a reasonable pace. Yes, my time has been fairly well spent since leaving. I haven't had a particularly hard time and I was OK for money. I've heard of a few plans for me to do some appearances, but there is nothing positive enough to talk about. There are vague ideas about a group as well.

"I've just spent my time writing fairly regularly. I've certainly not been bored and there are still a lot of things to do. When I was with the Floyd, the form of the music played on stage was mainly governed by the records. Now I seem to have got back to my previous state of mind. With the volume used, they inclined to push me a little. Yes there were hang-ups when I was with them, although it was not due to the travelling or anything, which you just put in the category of being a regular activity in that kind of job."

Does Syd like the music industry?

"It's beautiful here. I never go anywhere else. *Top Of The Pops* is alright! You meet interesting people and there are always people around I know and are prepared to like me. That's very nice. There's no gloom or depression for me. It's been very exciting, especially when I went

to America for two weeks before the split-up. Then we came back and played at the Albert Hall and it was very much a crescendo and I felt good. I miss playing to audiences, although I haven't missed it so much recently."

Was Syd satisfied with the LP?

"Well – no. I always find recording difficult. I can only think in terms of, well, I'm pleased with 40 minutes of sound, but I can't in terms of the pop industry. It's only a beginning – I've written a lot more stuff."

Syd occasionally laughed, seemed agitated or trailed away into silence during our conversation. Anything that seemed uninteresting or irrelevant merely provoked strained and disordered replies. A reference to the unusual phrasing and choppy lyrics of "Octopus" drew a smile.

"'Octopus' is a particular example of a recording being discussed as something exceptional because it takes an unusual metre. I don't read much, but I think I picked up Shakespeare as a book that just happened to be lying there to read. It was meant to be verse. I like to have really exciting, colourful songs. I can't really sing. But I enjoy writing from experiences. Some are so powerful they are ridiculous. The straight scene is best.

"What happened in Tottenham Court Road when we started was a microcosm of what happened later. I think pop today is a bit difficult to take in some ways – but its fine. I've never felt I have been left behind. I'd like to play sometime on the scene. Got to do something. It would be a splendid thing to get a band together."

Meanwhile Syd is getting Syd together, and those with a taste for any unusual talent on a supposedly wide-open scene, that is often oddly conservative, will find much to intrigue them on his strained, halting, but often beautiful set of songs. Laugh on, madcap. *Michael Watts* •





1970

JULY – SEPTEMBER

**FREE, BLACK SABBATH,
DEREK & THE DOMINOS,
THE FACES AND MORE**

“I was a drunken egotist”

MM JULY 18 Eric Burdon presents... War, his plans for films and thoughts on The Beatles. “I look at my psychedelic experience as my war,” he says. “With myself.”

HIGH UP ON the sixth floor of the plush Londonderry Hotel, Mayfair, Eric Burdon was sitting with his feet, clad in pumps, tucked beneath him; looking for all the world like an urchin guru. Chrissie Shrimpton once referred to him as “that sexy little singer”, but we needn’t go into all that. Certainly, Burdon himself doesn’t give a damn any more about pop stardom. Like he’s serious now, man, but serious. In an age of pop politicians he is right up there with the Country Joes, the Lennons and the rest of the hot political gospellers. If the world has not changed appreciably by 1984 it will assuredly not be for want of trying on the part of Mr Burdon.

Once upon a time he used to sing with The Animals, and he could knock back the Newcastle Brown with the best of ‘em. Then, as the hippy philosophy of flower power embraced the pop establishment with its overpowering scent, he turned to acid, and the image of the hard-boozing blues singer slipped. Simply, he went soft. Well, it’s all changed again now, apparently. He has spent the past two years in the States, trying unsuccessfully to break into the movies and, almost incidentally, forming a new band. Which he has called – wait for it – WAR.

Burdon does not see the title as implying a contradiction in all his past statements on love and peace. The way he sees it, they go hand in hand like love and marriage. “I believe in war and hatred, too, you see?” he declared earnestly. “You cannot go to war unless you know what peace is as well. I spent the first half of my life learning about one thing, now I am back and can judge both sides objectively. I would agree that acid softened me, but I was a drunken egotist and I’m still egotistical – when I get drunk.

“Sure I have changed. You know, there is a term that is disappearing and that’s the word ‘gentleman’, which means to be gentle and to be a man at the same time.”

So flower power was not just a media-inspired trend on the lines of reggae, say? “Oh, to those who did not drop the dope it was, but to those who did, it was a new life. It enabled me to separate my mind from my body, which I shall continue to do. It was an invaluable learning period for me and for many people.”

His view is that those whose minds became involved in a losing battle with acid during that period were part of a process of sorting the wheat from the chaff. “There are strong people and there are weak people,” he explained firmly, “and some of them did not make it through to the other side. That is the crux of the game. It is sad, but war and life are sad, too: there are casualties and people die. Look at it like this. Your father and mine were involved in wars, and I look at my psychedelic period as my war, a war with myself.” »





"You cannot go to war unless you know what peace is as well": ex-Animals frontman Eric Burdon hooks up with members of LA's Nightshift (previously The Creators) to form funk-rock group War

His stay in America, although he admits it has not been entirely happy, has been exciting because of the element of uncertainty in life there. Violence interests him deeply, to the extent that he has

a collection of guns and weapons. This aspect of American society fascinates him, but he is quick to point out that also it exists here.

"It's a different violence in England. Look at the establishment here, it split up The Beatles. I suspect it has forced Lennon to withdraw into his own thing because he was not getting the right understanding and help, and McCartney has become totally establishment.

"They could have become this generation's Rodgers and Hart, but Rodgers wanted it and Hart did not. Their personalities were reflected in the establishment. To me, that is violence; that is the same as a pig cop hitting a black over the head."

He intends to visually realise his views in the months ahead through several movies he has planned. He has six "treatments", or loosely written scripts, prepared so far, all of which sound highly complicated, to say the least. In Burdon's words, the first to be produced, from a script by Steve Gold, a former vice-president of Universal Productions, concerns two men "who are one man, brothers, really, but not realising it".

One is a cop, representing the straight establishment, and the other is conversely a rock'n'roller in the States, a pillar of the young, pop-orientated establishment, which is composed of "those kids who take the right dope, wear the right clothes and hang out with the right chicks."

The dramatic incident revolves around the subsequent clash of their respective personalities. The essence of the movie, he declares, is "finding the edge of the coin".

"American society does not allow a man to make a mistake. When he does, he is judged and put down for that mistake, although he has



already been put in the position of having to make it." The movie, he adds, tries to make this point. It all sounds involved, his subsequent

He realises that you just cannot

commandeer the movie business with a snap of your fingers. He has, he says, thousands of things to learn about films from the people with the skills before he can start making them himself. And not everybody is rooting for him, apparently. "A lot of people do not want me to get to say anything, because I threaten what they are and stand for."

Originally, he declares, MGM offered him a part in *Blow Up* as a beginning in films, but he could not do it because he was more interested in his music at the time and the vibes were not right between Antonioni and himself. When the two did finally get to grips with each other's beliefs he was asked to play in *Zabriskie Point*. By then, however, Eric did not like what he understood, so that was that.

Then again there was the sad saga of Peter Watkins' movie, *Privilege*, in which he was first considered for the role of the tame political pop star. Alas, states Burdon, Watkins wanted someone tall, slim and handsome, "not short, fat and ugly". Enter Paul Jones, who got the part. At least he knows what he likes, though – Ken Russell's *Women In Love*, for instance.

"That movie is really where I am at," he said flatly. "It is a total statement of every experience of love. I realised after seeing the movie why

I had never read a DH Lawrence book: it's because I already knew what he was saying. I could feel in my fingers the texture of what the director was putting together. I knew those faces in the film; they were the face of the people where I was born and raised in

Newcastle – the people who work all the year round from nine to five with two weeks at the sea – virtually pit ponies. The pity is that they still exist. When you have escaped from that scene, like me, you feel you want to pass on what you have learned."

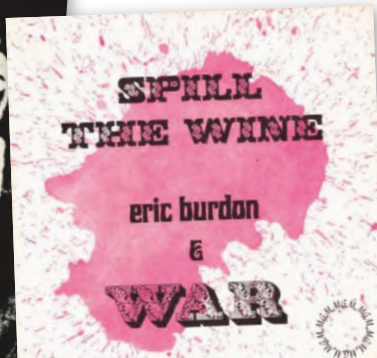
He feels that through his projected movies he can do his bit for these people and help to knock down the establishment. Certainly, he says, politicians can do nothing. "Not as they are now. I mean, look at Timothy Leary, whom the kids started off by idolising. What happened to him? He got involved in his own performance, and went and ran for the governorship of California."

With all this talk of the iniquitous establishment still hovering in the air, I left Burdon, to be collared as I got out of the lift on the ground floor by two of the hotel's liveried flunkies, who promptly subjected me to detailed questioning about who I was and what did I think I was doing using their lift. Eventually, I left. By a back door. Maybe Burdon has got a point, after all.

Michael Watts

"Look at the establishment here – it split up The Beatles"

BURDON
on
War,
Peace
Love
and
Hate



"We took in a tape... Apple decided to release it!"

MM AUG 29 Introducing... Hot Chocolate. "We did a reggae version of 'Give Peace A Chance'".

HOT CHOCOLATE, THE newest group to the charts, is at present made up of two professional and four semi-pro musicians. But soon that is to change, for with the success of "Love Is Life" the group will be playing gigs full time in a month or so.

Last week the two professionals, Errol Brown, who has shaved his head for a gimmick, and Tony Wilson, talked about the group. "The group used to play in the Brixton area," said bass guitarist Tony. "Before Errol and I met them they did the odd gig and things. After we had played with them for a while we decided to do a reggae version of 'Give Peace A Chance'. We took a tape to Apple, and they decided to release it."

A girl in the Apple office thought of the name Hot Chocolate, and John Lennon added "band" to their name for the single. "I think he thought it suited the record," said vocalist Errol, adding "probably because of the Plastic Ono Band".

The record was not a success in sales, but it did get their name known. They took



some tapes to Mickie Most, who gave their "Bet Your Life I Do" to Herman's Hermits. "Mickie asked us if we had anything else, so we took him along some tapes. Julie Felix is recording one of our songs for her next single. Another is going to Mary Hopkin, and Mickie asked us to record 'Love Is Life'," said Tony.

The group have played three big gigs so far and the idea of going on the road appeals to both the musicians: "The idea is great now we are known," said Tony, who has played with countless groups before.



September 13, 1970: on tour in Europe after announcing a deal with Marshall Chess (right), the Stones hold a press call in Hamburg harbour



Connections with Chess label

MM AUG 15 The Stones get closer to their R&B heroes.

A ROLLING STONES MOVE to Chess label man Marshall Chess on the expiry of their Decca contract means the group will be nearer the source of the music that originally inspired their formation. The Stones began six years ago as one of Britain's protagonists of the rhythm and blues revival.

And they were influenced by Chess recording artists like Chuck Berry, Bo Diddley, Muddy Waters and Howling Wolf. Chess was the pre-eminent blues label of the '50s. Now the group are expected to form their own label - to be headed by Marshall Chess. Mr Chess (27) has severed his connections with the original Chess label, and is to run the Stones' label, as yet untitled, from New York, while Trevor Churchill will run it from London. At press time there was no official confirmation of the signing, or details of distribution.

Chris Blackwell of Island Records told the *MM*: "I had talks with the Stones about distribution some months ago, but I have not heard anything since." And Polydor Records in London said they had not heard yet whether they would distribute Chess-Stones product. But the Stones are expected to start a search for new groups to join their label.

GETTY (2)

Without a label

NME AUG 8 The Stones leave Decca (and Allen Klein), and employ Marshall Chess. "There comes a time for a change," says Mick Jagger.

As of this moment, the Rolling Stones are without record label! Their contract with Decca - which has grossed over £60 million in the past seven years - expired last weekend, and an announcement is still awaited regarding the group's future plans. It seems unlikely that the Stones will re-sign with Decca, and the giant Atlantic company is strongly tipped as the group's new outlet. The Stones are certain to insist upon full artistic and material control over their future product, and with this in view, could well launch their own label - for distribution by Atlantic, or whichever company signs them. US sources suggest that the company which captures the Stones will have to come up with a guaranteed advance of over two-and-a-half-million dollars! This week, Mick Jagger would only restrict himself to the comment, "There comes a time for a change!"

The new Rolling Stones album, *Get Yer Ya-Ya's Out* - recorded during their concert at New York Madison Square Garden last November - will be issued in America in late summer, as the final release under their deal with London Records. This seems to suggest that the LP, which has already been hanging fire for several months, could be issued here by Decca even though their contract has

terminated. In the States, it will be issued as a double album, incorporating the acts of Ike & Tina Turner and BB King, who also took part in the New York concert. But the British release will be confined to the Stones alone, and it will

be a single album here. If Decca does issue an LP, the first release on the Stones' new label is expected to be drawn from material recorded last winter in Muscle Shoals, Alabama, together with tracks on which the group is currently working in London.

The Rolling Stones have broken away from their business manager, Allen Klein, and have told him that he no longer has authority to negotiate recording contracts on their behalf. In a statement issued this week Klein accepts this situation, but claims that he retains his "existing rights to manufacture Rolling Stones recordings in the future". And the Stones answered this by saying that they "are not aware of any contractual commitments after July 31".

The giant Atlantic company is strongly tipped as their new outlet

Link with blues heroes

STONES SIGN CHESS CHIEF

1970

JULY – SEPTEMBER

“Afro beat is heavy!”

MM AUG 29 Ginger Baker returns from Africa, via car crashes, new collaborations and new rivalries.

GINGER BAKER KNOWS what they say about him – and he’ll drink a toast in vodka, wink and war dance on his tom-toms in defiance. Air Force a hype? He’s got an answer for that. A feud with Elvin Jones? He’ll take Elvin on anytime. Beneath a bragging exterior, a modest man... keeps fairly quiet. Ginger ain’t a monster, but he’s honest and forthright, which can earn him the dislike of those who can’t forgive the brash and brave.

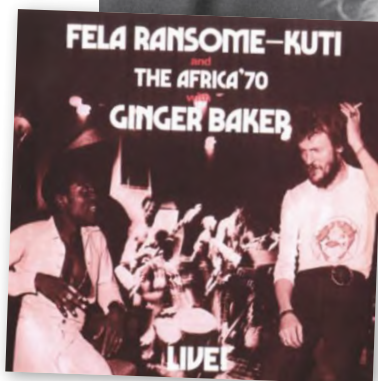
If Ginger wasn’t the way he was – he couldn’t play drums the way he does. And he wouldn’t have been such an inspiration for so many of today’s rock players. An English writer with a talent for upsetting rock artists recently described Ginger Baker as a “cult figure” in an apparently uncomplimentary article. “If I ever see him again, I’ll punch him in the face,” promised Mr Baker.

But if there are dissenting voices raised against him in England and America, there is one country he can be assured a warm welcome – Nigeria. Ginger has just returned from an extraordinary safari across Africa, and declares he is in love with the country. At a 31st-birthday drink at his London home last week, he waxed enthusiastic about his adventures, and in passing promised that Air Force would keep on flying, whoever tried to shoot him down.

He relaxed in an armchair, strumming a guitar. “Eric taught me how to play,” he said, patting the heads of his three children, and occasionally swearing at them when they looked in deadly combat.

“I’ve always wanted to go to Africa,” he explained, pushing an Algerian hat over eyes recovering from mosquito bites. “I stayed in Ghana and Lagos with Guy Warren and saw Remi Kabaka and Fela Ransome-Kuti, who is a trumpet player, singer and dancer. He’s got a club and a band with three saxes and a conga drummer which plays a thing called Afro-beat. And it’s heavy! Peter King the alto player is getting an incredible band together in Lagos as well.

“Afro-beat makes Motown look sick. I played with Fela’s band and a group called the Hickers. I was about two weeks in Lagos, and



Bilbao in northern Spain in my Jensen, and drove to southern Spain in a day; I did the last 140 kilometres in 50 minutes between one and two in the morning. That’s moving some.

“I took the car across to Africa and put my faith in God. I was in Marrakesh for five days, and then I got the feeling I had to get out and drove 24 hours to Fez and the border. All the people laughed because my Moroccan money couldn’t be changed. From there I went to Oran in Algeria. That was HOT, but the roads were great – as far as I went. There wasn’t any good petrol a couple of times.

“I got as far as the last stop, with the car full of Sahara sand, when I did the crash. It wasn’t as bad as it could have been. I was lucky. I’m still not sure what happened. Jensen are checking over the car. I remember catching a tree. It wasn’t in the desert, it was in hilly country. I got out, without a scratch. I knew what I was doing – I’m good at crashing cars.

“The people there were marvellous. Nobody knew who I was – they just thought I was peculiar. I had my hair tied back like an Arab woman, and all the kids called me ‘Madame Messieur’ and ran away screaming with laughter. It was really quite funny. I left the car with a respectable citizen and caught an aeroplane to Ghana. I walked out of the airport and

had a ball. It’s a beautiful town. You want to know how it all started?

Well, I was in

got arrested for not having a passport stamped. Then they let me go and I stayed at Guy Warren’s house. I knew Guy from 1960 when he came to Britain. He’s a complete madman, but a good guy.

“I tried to get a Nigerian visa, and in the end I just flew into Lagos without one and they gave me an extension. I had an incredibly good time there. There were a lot of mosquitos, which is why the white man is thin on the ground in the West Coast. The second day I got knocked flat on my back with bites, but I took some tablets, after swelling up like a balloon.

“Nigeria is an unspoilt country which keeps its African culture. It will be rich and powerful one day. They were all so pleased to see me, yet when Remi Kabaka comes here he gets turned away.

“They are a more cultured and civilised people than many people in Britain. And Nigeria is where the musicians come from.”

Did Ginger pick up much from the African drummers?

“Oh man! There was a drum choir playing pieces of wood that were incredible. I had a play with them, and there were two kids, who frightened the life out of me, and two old men.”

Ginger had to race back from his Africa high life to

the disastrous Krumlin Festival, for a non-existent gig with Air Force. But he didn’t seem too upset. “We got a phone call that it was called off. I hear the stage got washed away and there was no point in our going up, except to help with the rescue work. It seems to me that Air Force is doomed. People don’t want Air Force to happen!”

What did he want to do in the future?

“I want to get out to the States and see Elvin Jones.”

MIRROPIX

en back to Africa for Ginger

GINGER BAKER knows



Ginger Baker: having "a ball" with Fela Kuti's band in Lagos

In recent interviews Ginger and Elvin had been exchanging verbal fisticuffs, Elvin expressing the view that Baker can't play. Ginger determined to challenge him to a drum duel.

"It's just a needle match," smiled Ginger. "I've asked for all the knocks I get from the statements I make. In a recent jazz poll I put Max Roach first, me second and Tony Williams third. All I want to do is play in front of people, and if Elvin is game, so am I. Max Roach plays better than anybody anyway, and Elvin isn't playing as well as he did five years ago.

"If you can't have a laugh about it... well, what's it all about? If I played alongside Elvin, he would make me play good, and I'd make him play good. Half the people would be on his side to come and see me make a ---- of myself, we'd play together and make ---- of all of them."

Would Air Force reduce to a smaller lineup? "That's what people keep saying to me. I'm thinking about it. I'm not over-sorry about the people who have left, but I like to have horns in the lineup. Harold McNair isn't in the band any more, and I don't want him back. He's a good player - but he was coming on strong a bit.

"I'm all for carrying on the band, but it needs a lot of work. I prefer people to be flexible, but some of them were set on their rails. That was Harold's trouble. The second LP is done, but I'm not too sure about some of the numbers. I don't do a solo - maybe I will take one of the tracks off and put on a solo.

"They say life begins at 40, but at 30 it goes haywire. I fancy doing one more tour, and then I'm going back to Africa. I'm getting a thing together there with some friends."

The "thing" is secret but Ginger wants to help the music scene in Nigeria. Quite when Air Force take off again is not known. But the Baker drums will thunder on, and the spirit won't be grounded. *Chris Welch*

"A question I cannot answer"

MM AUG 15 What is happening with The Beatles, the *Maker* asks?

How long is it since The Beatles - all four of them - actually played together?

Apple: The last time was during the recording of the *Abbey Road* album, which was in the late summer of 1969. Various members of the group have since recorded together on individual sessions. George has been on Ringo's sessions and vice versa, but all four have never actually played together since summer 1969. That's about a year ago.

Is there any recorded material still unreleased?

Apple: No. Even if there was it would never be issued. The group are always very conscious of keeping up with the current tastes.

Are any of the individual members working on solo albums at present?

Apple: Ringo has completed his country album in Nashville and it will probably be released in September. George is nearing the completion of his new album but we don't know when it will be released. This will be very different from his solo albums. The other two have not been in the recording studios but I would presume they have not been idle during the summer. It is not their nature to sit and do nothing.

Why has John Lennon been in Los Angeles all this year?

Apple: He is living very quietly over there. There have been no press reports about his activities, so I assume he is living quietly. He has rented a house there. There is a lot of building going on at his house in Ascot. I have no idea when he will be back.

Where are the other three Beatles at the moment?

Apple: Paul is at his farm in Scotland. I have no idea when he will return to London. George and Ringo are both at their homes.

Are there any plans for any kind of performance whatsoever?

Apple: None at all. There are no plans for any shows or tours.

What, if any, plans do the individual members of the group have for the future?

Apple: I don't think any of them have any long-term plans. This isn't unusual because they have never made long-term plans, even in their touring days. George is increasing his success at writing his own songs. He has developed as a composer and will probably continue this. Ringo is exploring different things. He may do more films and may do more comedy, singing and acting.

Have The Beatles finished as a group?

Apple: That is a question I cannot answer. There is no harm in anyone discussing it, but it is a futile discussion for people who are not

involved in it. I don't think they will ever lose their Beatles tag, even though they may never work together again.

"There are no plans for any shows or tours"

Was *Let It Be* the last Beatles album, as it

appeared to be from the way it was packaged?

Apple: That way it was packaged did not mean it was the final album. The art work was planned long before all the publicity about the group breaking up. It may have looked like that but it wasn't meant to.

Does the fact that there are no plans for the future mean there is no future for The Beatles?

Apple: No. The fact that there are no plans doesn't mean anything. The group have never planned things much. It is not essential to make plans with the Beatles.

PA



April 10, 1970: Beatles fans gather outside Apple's office on Savile Row in central London

BEATLES
the facts

1970

JULY – SEPTEMBER

“We live for the next gig”

FREE are longtime triers – but a hit single suddenly makes them a household name. As “All Right Now” reaches a huge audience, half the band shyly enjoy the acclaim, while the other half look to their next triumph. “People were on the roof,” smiles singer Paul Rodgers.

— MELODY MAKER FEBRUARY 7 —

ONE OF THE good things to have emerged from the blues boom of 18 months ago has been Free. Their music contains a punchy simplicity which comes as a refreshing change from the bands who seem intent on confusing minds with gross over-elaboration. They have it on a formula which will grab people in much the same way as Jethro Tull or Family have done, and I am not alone when I predict that in the next 12 months they will have made a lasting mark on the British music scene.

Free are completely aware of their music, they know exactly where they are going and pretentiousness within the group is nonexistent. The group comprises: Paul Rodgers, vocals; Andy Fraser, bass; Paul Kossoff, guitar; and Simon Kirke, drums. Free were born about a year and a half ago at the very height of the blues boom. These were the times when blues groups lurked round every corner. When I interviewed Simon Kirke and Paul Rodgers in his Holborn flat last week they were the first to admit that they had been in on the boom but there the similarity between them and a hundred other groups ended.

“We really loved the blues then and we still do,” said Paul. “We always tried to play with the utmost feeling and we tried to swing all the time. It’s so easy to play the blues badly and still fool a lot of people, but there’s no satisfaction in that. The »

GETTY

October 23, 1970:
Paul Rodgers
performing with
Free at Imperial
College, London



1970

JULY – SEPTEMBER

Slow, deliberate

NME JULY 11 Paul Rodgers talks about Free's breakthrough third album: "This one has more feel..."

FREE HAVE THE top-selling single this week and the fastest-selling new album. Coupled with their ability to virtually outdraw most other groups in the country, they have much to be pleased about. One morning last week, lead singer Paul Rodgers and myself got together over coffee to do a "track-by-track" of Free's new album *Fire And Water* (Island stereo, ILPS 9120, 37s 5d).

Prior to actually listening to the album, Paul had this to say. "When you just work the clubs you are entirely wrapped up in the music, then when you suddenly get a record high in the charts the pressures upon you increase. Now that it's all happening, you really do have to concentrate and remember that you are in it for the music. For single success can bring you out of the group unit. But we're still enjoying things and having a good time.

"The success of 'All Right Now' has given us a wider audience, and at many places people have been climbing on the roof in an effort to get to hear us. Singles are not really representative of Free; what we are all about is when we are on stage... we prefer an audience."

Having stated the group's position, we then got down to the job in hand...that of listening to the new album.

Fire And Water

PAUL RODGERS: "This song was buzzing around in my mind for months when we toured the States with Blind Faith. There's a whole new soul sound emerging in the States, it's much stronger and cleaner than before.

James Brown and Sly & The Family Stone are very much into it. Genuine soul, as opposed to the sock-it-to-me type, does have a genuine and sincere feeling for the music. You know, we all really enjoyed making this album. When we cut our very first long-player, *Tons Of Sobs*, we were very nervous and weren't really pleased with it, while I felt the second one was far too clean. This one has more feel and sound about it. I like it."

ROY CARR: A medium-paced opener based on a simple riff and heavily accentuated beat. Nice vocal and a slow, deliberate guitar solo.

Oh I Wept

PR: "This is more Paul Kossof's song than mine. I just wrote lyrics to it. As usual, I write about my personal experiences."

RC: This song starts off very slowly and very quietly, with echoey drums. Maintains this mood throughout.

Remember

PR: "About two years ago I had a little bed-sitter in West Hampstead, but I got kicked out



for having no bread. To be truthful, I had to do a moonlight flit. As I had nowhere to stay I moved in with Andy in Roehampton. During this time we wrote an incredible amount of songs together, at least 10 a week. This song comes from that period. I like Kirky's bongo playing on this track. We like to keep a form to our work. There has to be a basis, like we take it in turns to put one instrument into prominence. I don't believe in this freeform music.

"Now I'll write a song, and it'll be a very rough thing, but Andy will take it and rearrange it for the group. When Andy writes, he just does the backing and I put the lyrics to it."

RC: An excellent song which could easily appear on other people's albums. You could imagine it being sung by Otis Redding or Wilson Pickett, complete with Stax brass. The whole production has a good feel to it with a powerful vocal from Paul, while Paul Mk 2 plays good guitar solo which benefits from his

minimal use of notes instead of the "how many notes can I cram into a stanza" usually adopted by unimaginative players.

Heavy Load

PR: "Ah, this is my favourite song on the album. Andy worked the piano part out and I think it's wonderful. The very first time I heard it, I thought it was truly beautiful. We only decided to do it on the spot in the studio. It's a good track, but I think it needs a few listens to."

RC: Solo piano intro by Andy Fraser which predominates throughout and leads into a simple solo which keeps very close to the basic chord structure.

Mr Big

PR: "This is a mean one. Originally 'Mr Big' was my song, but everyone worked so hard on it

that I felt that it was only right everyone got a credit. Both this and 'Fire And Water' are among our most popular numbers on stage. I really like Andy's bass solo on this one. He really gets going on it - he's a remarkable player."

RC: Another good medium-paced number, with accentuated guitar on the offbeat and interweaving basslines. Andy's solo is first rate, with his bass guitar sounding like a bassoon at times.

Don't Say You Love Me

PR: "This comes from the time that Andy and I wrote 'Remember'. We recorded it late at night when everyone was feeling a little tired and slow. That's why there's such a nice and very relaxed feel to it."

RC: A slow and very quiet song which builds to a very soulful crescendo.

All Right Now (long version)

PR: "We really got into this album, but first we had to get used to the fact that we didn't have an audience. It's quite interesting as to how 'All Right Now' came about. We were all sitting in the dressing room before a gig in Manchester and we were talking about the need for us to do a number where everyone could join in and clap. So we decided to work it out there and then, with everyone just clapping their hands while I tried to fit in some words.

"It's a very happy and easy-going type of song. It took about 16 hours to record. When we'd finished, everyone liked it, but Chris Blackwell said it was far too long for a single.

"Originally we didn't want him to mess about with it, for we weren't sure how it would turn out if he edited it. But Chris did a good job and it turned out OK. All I hope is that people who buy the album enjoy it."

RC: The only real uptempo song on the entire album, which everyone is already very familiar with, and a fine closer to an album which will consolidate Free's position on the scene.

Roy Carr

"We like to keep a form to our work... I don't believe in this freeform music"

boom did do a lot of good though, in that musicians had a better chance of getting together. In the States there never has been a sudden mass liking for blues. It's always been there and it's really weird when BB King is known as the 'ace supporting act'."

"Our first gig on the American tour was very frightening," says Simon. "We went over there with Blind Faith and played one gig with them at Madison Square Gardens. In Britain the largest crowds we have ever played to have been two to three thousand, but that time twenty thousand showed up and this scared us which meant we played badly. After that gig we split and did a tour on our own which went much better."

"Nowadays the American kids won't accept any old rubbish that is given them. At one time if a group had the British tag it was taken that they must be good whether they were or not. Things have improved a lot now because most of the British bands who go over there are good and have earned their reputation in this country. In Britain you have to be good to survive because of all the free competition."

Free have had two albums released in Britain, although they weren't too satisfied with the first. In April they are off again to the States. "We will be mentally prepared for the trip this time," said Simon. "America takes a lot of getting used to socially."

"When you're in Britain you think you hate the policemen, until you go over there and find them all walking about as if they were cowboys. In fact, they look exactly like cowboys with the guns and all the gear. They had a good knock at the Madison Square Gardens concert when some of the kids rushed the stage."

"America is very rewarding financially," says Paul, "but I could never live there. There are so many bad vices. The money that the American kids have is incredible. A bird will pick YOU up in a Mustang, but to get the Mustang she will have paid for it with three nervous breakdowns and an abortion."

For a group who write virtually all their own material, Paul and Andy Fraser being responsible for most numbers, the unavoidable question of influence cropped up.

Simon: "Obviously most of the blues greats have influenced us, especially the three Kings, and probably John Mayall. We all admire him for what he has done for the music and consequently for the musicians."

On the current British groups who have found favour, Paul says: "People like Jethro Tull have been pushed a bit too hard and as a result their singles have suffered, and none of the young white American bands really move me." *Raymond Telford*

— NME AUGUST 1 —

"I THINK THAT 'All Right Now' has the perfect ingredients for a big hit." Without showing any trace of egotism, this is the very honest and factual opinion of Simon Kirke, Free's slightly introverted drummer. The reasons for this self-analytical statement are: "The song has a good and instant hookline, plus a strong beat to dance and rave about to." He added, "If you listen to the longer version on the album you'll hear that it also has a very good storyline."

Success didn't come easy to Free; it took close on three years of gruelling one-nighters, three albums and an instantly accepted single. When it arrived, it struck with all the furore of a force-10 hurricane. The devastating impact of which has been duly felt at the very summit of both the singles and albums charts.

Not since the touring heyday of The Beatles and the Stones have an album and single chased each other up the best-selling list with such speed, and in doing so ignited the fuse for the biggest explosion of genuine fan-mania in years.



"At one gig with Blind Faith, 20,000 showed up. It scared us"

true to say that now everyone wants to know Free. But it's also true to state, if only for the record, that prior to attaining these trophies of success they were held in the very highest of esteem by thousands of Free fans throughout England and Europe.

Aside from the accolades, they now have to contend with such occupational hazards as "the knockers". For in certain dark corners the rather over-loud beery voices of the Johnny-know-all have been heard to expound, "They've sold out."

"Anyway, what is the definition of selling out?" Simon queried as he pondered over a glass of Spanish red wine. "I would hope that people who know us would appreciate the position that we are in," he said, trying to define a self-asked question that doesn't really apply to Free.

"We don't pander to anything or anyone. It's just that we came up with the right formula at the right time. Basically we have the same stage act that we had last year. All that's really changed is the material. Of course, since the record clicked we do find ourselves playing to a lot more people."

How they get in to see Free must be amazing, because the group were playing to packed houses a long time before they made the charts.

"That's the only thing that bothers me," Simon admitted. "Many of our most staunchest and long-standing fans are having to endure standing in queues and a lot of aggravation in order to get into see us. Unfortunately this is beyond our control."

At this point in our conversation we were joined by the group's publicist, young Bill Harry, and Free's vocalist Paul Rodgers. It was Paul who took it upon himself to replenish our empty wine glasses, muttering and laughing to himself that it was like they were still on tour. For they had just returned from a whirlwind jaunt around some of the capitals of Europe with Traffic.

To call Free a funky little band brings a smile to Simon's face, because that's exactly how he feels »



"We all love playing onstage together": Free drummer Simon Kirke in 1970



GETTY

1970

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about their music. As Paul sat grinning at Mr Kirke being interviewed, he nodded in agreement to what Simon was saying. "We all admire the sound that comes out of the Stax studios. It's so right, with everything being kept simple yet totally effective. If it's straightforward and simple then more people are going to dig it." With this statement he summed up the magic essence of Free's overwhelming popularity.

"I was once asked why I never took a solo. It's because I like to keep everything tight. I dig people like Booker T's drummer, Al Jackson, and that great guy who appears on many of the Atlantic albums, Roger Hawkins. Now those guys really know what to play and, most important, when to play it. A drummer should just make you want to nod along in time with the music. On the other hand, I enjoy Buddy Rich, because of his virtuosity and I accept him for that."

It was not time for us to return to the Island offices as there was still much answering of questions and clicking of cameras to be done before the boys were due to leave for that evening's gig. On our way back, Simon drove the point home when he revealed, "We live for the next gig, and you can't beat it. We all love playing on stage together; it's not self-indulgent, because our audiences really dig what we enjoy, so we're all happy."

"It's all a question of getting on with people before you can make any headway. We always want to evoke a good reaction rather than a bad one. In the music game, there are so many pressures that people outside of the business never encounter or think exist. If you want to be realistic about it, then it's a rat race."

Free have gone through their period of internal strain, petty arguments and worry, in the early days of formulating their career.

"Today, we really dig each other, and everyone." For them everything is on the up-and-up, or you could say it's All Right Now. *Roy Carr*

— NME AUGUST 29 —

"WELL THEN... HOW did that one sound?" yelled Simon Kirke from the studio floor, suddenly breaking the few seconds of silence. "Alright," came the immediate reply from Paul Rodgers in the control room. "But I think that we can get it much better."

As if reacting to some invisible force, the rest of the group automatically got up from their resting places and trundled off back into the studio to rejoin their drummer in putting down yet another "take".

It was now fast approaching 1am and Free were getting down to the all-important task of recording backing tracks for their next album. Now a recording session can either prove to be the most boring and tedious of spectator sport, or on the other hand it can provide an evening's (or in this particular case an early morning's) entertainment. The demanding pressures of their current success haven't diminished Free's enthusiasm or dulled their creative ability. If anything it's heightened their senses. Having enjoyed the rarity of a chart double-top, they are determined to sustain their now enviable position, but not to the point of overtaxing their talent in one mad effort to cash in on the many tempting and lucrative rewards within their grasp.

When I arrived at Island Records just after the bewitching hour, Paul Kossoff (hereafter referred to by his group nickname of PK), Andy Fraser, Paul and Simon seemed very pleased with the way things were progressing. With his usual friendly smile, Paul of the famous appearing and disappearing beard informed me, "You know, we've managed to lay down three songs in three nights." Which is good going by anyone's standard.

"The Stax sound is so right... simple yet totally effective"

overhead speakers that made me realise that it was indeed a studio. The banks of highly sophisticated electronic devices, multi-coloured lights and predominant control board give the impression of 2001.

"Can I have a bit more volume on my cans," Simon requested, referring to the headphones he was wearing. Surrounded by a barricade of baffleboards, he was laying down a Staxish backbeat to the latest Fraser-Rodgers composition, "Highroad" – a nice chunk of rockin' down-home funk. Satisfied with the volume on his cans and following a false start, he remarked, "It's a strange feeling playing without the bass", for bassist Andy

Fraser was putting a rolling piano part on the number.

"Not to worry, it'll be OK when I track on the bass part later on,"



NME'S ROY CARR SITS IN ON A FREE ALBUM SESSION



Free in 1970: (l-r)
Andy Fraser, Paul
Rodgers, Paul
Kossoff, Simon Kirke

Andy reassured him from the other end of the studio. And he was as good as his word.

After yet another false start, a good take was safely in the can, and the essential ritual of listening to the playback was conducted. As the “Mickey Mouse” sounds of the sped-up tape rewind whirled around the control room, Jimmy Cliff quietly slipped in for a preview after spending some hours mixing the tapes which he recently cut in Muscle Shoals for his next album, in Island’s Number 2 studio.

As the track came thundering through the bank of playback speakers, PK enthused most energetically to all he heard.

“Hey Rodgers,” he chortled, “it’s the first time you’ve played on a disc, isn’t it,” referring to the fact that his namesake had been laying down some strong chunky block chords on a Gibson. Paul just grinned in acknowledgement.

“It could do with something in the middle-eight, don’t you think?” queried Andy Johns, who was engineering the session, to Andy Fraser.

“I suppose so,” was the reply. “We’ve been trying out some interesting combinations on the mellotron,” he informed Andy as they both wondered off into the studio.

Already the pangs of hunger were being experienced by one and all, so as part of the Roy Carr Survival Course, I slipped out of the studios into the pouring rain, returning 15 minutes later laden with much nosh. Amidst much cheering and grunts it was rapidly devoured. By this time all the backing tracks had been completed and it was now time for Paul Rodgers to put on the vocals.

After loosening up his vocal cords in one mad frenzy in the studio, Paul donned a pair of cans and positioned himself in front of a mic as the backing track was played over for him.

As he started to sing the lyrics to “Highroad” which he had scribbled on a couple of pages from my notebook, it all took on an entirely new dimension.

With complete spontaneity, he added some effective falsetto hollers and whoops, to the sheer delight of PK, who again was visually digging it all between bites of a sandwich. Meanwhile, Simon, who was sat right next to me, rocked gently from side to side with his eyes closed to the beat he’d helped to lay down earlier.

Still slightly overwhelmed by the success of “All Right Now”, he suddenly remarked, “It’s just great... the world sales have now passed a million. A lot of people take such figures for granted, but it just knocks me out.

“Not only has it made all the major European charts, but it’s starting to break very big in the States,” he added with what can only be described as personal relief.

As the sound faded away, Paul reappeared to give his verdict to the playback. Though it sounded quite acceptable and vital, he was most dissatisfied. “I can do that a whole lot better,” he informed everyone, screwing his face up. “First of all I just want to alter a couple of words so that it’ll flow better” – and it did.

With the big hand on my watch at 12 and the small one on 5, I decided to retire gracefully before flaking out on the oh-so-tempting control-room couch. However, as it was already occupied by the now horizontal form of PK, I again decided to brave the elements once more and return to Chez Carr. *Roy Carr*

— MELODY MAKER SEPTEMBER 19 —

IT WAS INEVITABLE that Free should figure somewhere in the *MM* poll – 1970 has been their year. After two years of gradual building up, the London blues outfit have at last earned the recognition they deserve.

Andy Fraser, the group’s bass guitarist, can be excused for feeling a little more pleased than his three colleagues, for he has made the sixth slot in the bass guitarist section, topping – would you believe – Paul McCartney and Bill Wyman. And he co-wrote “All Right Now” with singer Paul Rodgers, which topped the British Single Of The Year class.

“Yes, I must admit it feels very nice to think I have written the top single,” he said this week. “It really gives me a buzz to think so many thought it was the best record.”

Andy took up the piano at five and his keyboard talents will be evident with the release of Free’s fourth album in November. At 11, he took up guitar and switched to bass a year later because nobody in his school group could play bass.

“I went to college and met Alexis Korner and started getting some gigs with him. Then after a few months John Mayall phoned up Alexis and asked him if he knew a bassist and he told him about me. I went to meet John and we played for a bit and I joined him.

“The band in those days had Mick Taylor, Keef Hartley, Dick Heckstall-Smith, Chris Mercer, Henry Lowther and, of course, John. It lasted for about a few months and broke up after I left. It wasn’t really happening for us and I wanted to write. It was obvious to John and me that we were going in different directions.

“Then someone put me in touch with Paul Kossoff, who was looking for a bass player to form a band. I met him and he introduced me to Paul Rodgers and Simon Kirke and we auditioned each other. I remember we wrote two numbers on the first night, which was very inspiring.”

The group have just one more track to do on their new album, which – says Andy – will be their best ever. Three numbers on it – “Riding On A Pony”, “Be My Friend” and “The Stealer” – have been regularly featured live in recent weeks. Whether or not there will be another single depends on Island, their recording company, but the group themselves are not worried about a follow-up.

The story behind “All Right Now” is worth telling. It was written after a “bad” gig in Manchester. Andy started a riff on guitar and Paul came in with some obscene vocals. The words were censored a bit for the record, which was originally an LP track. “We had released two singles before which sold about two copies each, and thought that was it. Then at the last minute we decided to put out ‘All Right Now’ as a third attempt.”

It was definitely a case of third time lucky. •



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JULY - SEPTEMBER



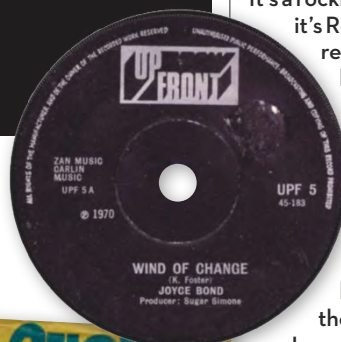
— TRACKS —
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The chords were drastic – the changes – it didn't bother me too much – as it was light it seemed to flow. The lyrics were funny – but the voice was another instrument. Obviously it's not meant to be judged as a song.

Audience
Belladonna Moonshine

CHARISMA

It's a rocking Rex beginning – it's Rex again. I know the record, I've heard it before. I know what they mean by changing it in the middle – I personally would have liked to do something more with the saxes. Basically it's good – I like it. I don't know why they had to do the middle; I suppose it makes people stand up and listen. I don't mind listening to the same sort of backing for three minutes. The trouble is that records have to be made to be played on Radio One.



"What are you trying to do to me?"

MM JULY 25 Ray Davies reacts to the new tunes.

"LOLA" HITMAKER RAY Davies returns to the singles fray. Ray Davies, a happy man at the moment, with The Kinks' latest single, "Lola", high in the charts, sat through Blind Date puffing a large cigar. "I don't smoke, so I puff at these things," he said. He seemed to enjoy most of the records, and insisted that mono records were played through one speaker, and stereo played stereo.

Deep Feeling
Skyline Pigeon PAGE ONE

It's hard to say really. It weaves in so many different directions and patterns. I'm not going to say I don't like it – it might sound nice on the radio. But nothing very good has happened to me – it hasn't knocked me over – but then I suppose it's not meant to.

Mike d'Abo
California Line UNI

Sounds like someone trying to sing like Bob Dylan. Obviously it's made for an album. It's an English production – a Bob Dylan London special. It's a weird change. The thing with Bob Dylan is when he sings low anyone can sing like it – maybe that's

why he sells. As soon as I heard this, it sounded produced – it had an echo on mouth organ.

Brian Auger & The Trinity
I Wanna Take You Higher

FROM THE LP BEFOUR, RCA

It's an English record again – the group is probably good live. Are there two organists? No, it sounds like double tracking. There's a Joe Tex riff – I'm not saying it is Joe Tex, but that's a riff he uses, Sly & The Family Stone type of thing. If you walk into a nightclub – it's the sort of thing you hear when you walk in.



Traffic
Freedom Rider

FROM THE LP JOHN BARLEYCORN MUST DIE, ISLAND

I think it's an English record. It's a flute, isn't it? Yeah, that's nice – quite nice. Sounds like he doubles on saxes – does he sing as well? No, it's Stevie Winwood singing – must be Jim Capaldi on drums. Traffic – yes this is similar to their first album – they surprise me – when they

used to make singles they were totally different to their albums.

Joyce Bond
Wind Of Change

UP FRONT

She's got a nice voice – is this reggae? I like the double lyric – I don't know whether it's trad, blue beat, reggae or what. I've heard the voice before – I know that person – the rest of it doesn't help the voice at all. Doesn't sound like the musicians are at all interested; this happens when you cut a track in three hours – probably put the back track down first. What are you trying to do to me!

May Blitz
Tomorrow May Come

FROM THE LP MAY BLITZ, VERTIGO

Is it an album – The Walker Brothers? It's quite restful really – quite hypnotic. There are a lot of long words – I'll have to get my dictionary out. Obviously more concerned with lyric than music – poetry really – ultraviolet and things. It would be interesting to see them live. There's nothing too obvious in it.

RAY DAVIES in Blind Date

GETTY



Templeton Twins**Hey Jude** LIBERTY

Bullshit – real bullshit – Paul McCartney's demo. With any luck it'll go to No 1 and *Sunday Night At The Palladium* will come back on the telly. What are you trying to do to me?

Yes**Everydays**FROM THE LP *TIME AND A WORD* AND A WORD, ATLANTIC

Good – I like the strings at the beginning. It's very hard to get that sound. Sounds like Cleo Laine – probably meant to sound like that chap from The Zombies. If it goes back into the song I'll kill him – it's like atomic fallout – is it a soundtrack? You can't condemn people – it's good actually. It's the second record that changed suddenly like that. It's good, that one.

**Max Romeo****Flab in a Pond** UNITY

Desmond Dekker – it's good. Good hi-hat – hi-hats are very difficult to play like that. I like it a lot.

Fotheringay**The Ballad of Ned Kelly**FROM THE LP *FOTHERINGAY*, ISLAND

I've heard this before – it sounds like "The Weight" – it's not The Band. Same feel as The Band – but the guitar's better than The Band. Very tight – I like the chorus because it's not double tracked – if you want a hundred voices you should get a hundred singers. Very good – I like the girl singers in groups.



— TRACKS —
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the same as Diana Ross. I don't think the sound sticks out enough, though. It seems a bit quiet and afraid.

"I don't know anything about hits"

MM AUG 1 So says Free frontman Paul Rodgers in this week's *Blind Date*, though he does really.

WITH HIS GROUP'S record flying high at the top of the charts, Paul Rodgers is a happy man at the moment – although he is a bit scared that too much publicity might harm the underground image that Free have built up in the last 18 months. He's a big Joni Mitchell fan, and was a bit disappointed that the selection we played didn't include any Joni songs. He raves over anything that swings.

Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young**Ohio** ATLANTIC

This is very nice; beautiful in fact. It must be Eric Clapton on that guitar. I don't know who they are but they make a really good sound. They're probably American, but the song is recorded beautifully. (*On being told*) Don't ask me if it's going to be a hit, because I don't know anything about hits. I don't like everything they do because I like a hard lead voice, but that song is really nice.

Eric Burdon & War**Spill The Wine** STATESIDE

I like that washboard sound. Is it Frank Zappa? It's a good song with a nice swing and I like the singer's voice. (*On being told*) His voice has changed a lot since The Animals' day. I think it's a lot better now.

Jackson 5**The Love You Save**

TAMLA MOTOWN

It's a Jackson 5. Is this their new single? I liked their other singles. It's unbelievably tight and there is some good cymbal



work. I don't think it is as catchy as their other two. I can't hear the words, so I don't know what he is singing about.

Gulliver**Every Day's A Lovely Day**

ELEKTRA

This has a nice beat and I like it. I think the key is a bit high for the singer, though.

Supremes**Everybody's Got The Right To Love**

TAMLA MOTOWN

This is quite a record. It must be Diana Ross. (MM: *It's The Supremes without Diana Ross.*) Paul: It sounds just like her. Whoever is singing sings just

Ray Stevens**But You Know I Love You**

MONUMENT

This isn't really as strong as the music I like to listen to. I like a strong beat. This seems a bit insipid. The Sweet Inspirations have done this and their version was much more powerful. Take it off.

Clancy Eccles & The Dynamites**Africa** CLAN DISC

Oh no! Take it off, please. I don't like the harmonies. I don't hate all reggae; some of it has got a nice beat. But this is badly performed and badly recorded.

Black Sabbath**Paranoid** VERTIGO

This is a heavy sound, but I don't know who it is. It's very well recorded but I feel I have heard so many things like this before. The bass and the drummer don't seem very together and neither does the guitarist really. Maybe they are better on stage. I like things to sound heavy but melodic at the same time, as well as tight together.

Richard Harris**Ballad Of A Man Called Horse**

STATESIDE

This is nice and peaceful, and there's a beautiful guitar sound. Is it Tim Rose? It doesn't sound like a young singer. I think I like the intro better than the song. It's too smooth for me, but the backing is lovely. The drumming is very good.

Jimmy McGriff**The Worm** UNITED ARTISTS

This is nice, the drumming is great. Oh yes, I like this one. Leave it here when you go. It really jumps out of the speakers. Is it Jimmy McGriff? It must be. That drumming is too much.

1970

JULY – SEPTEMBER

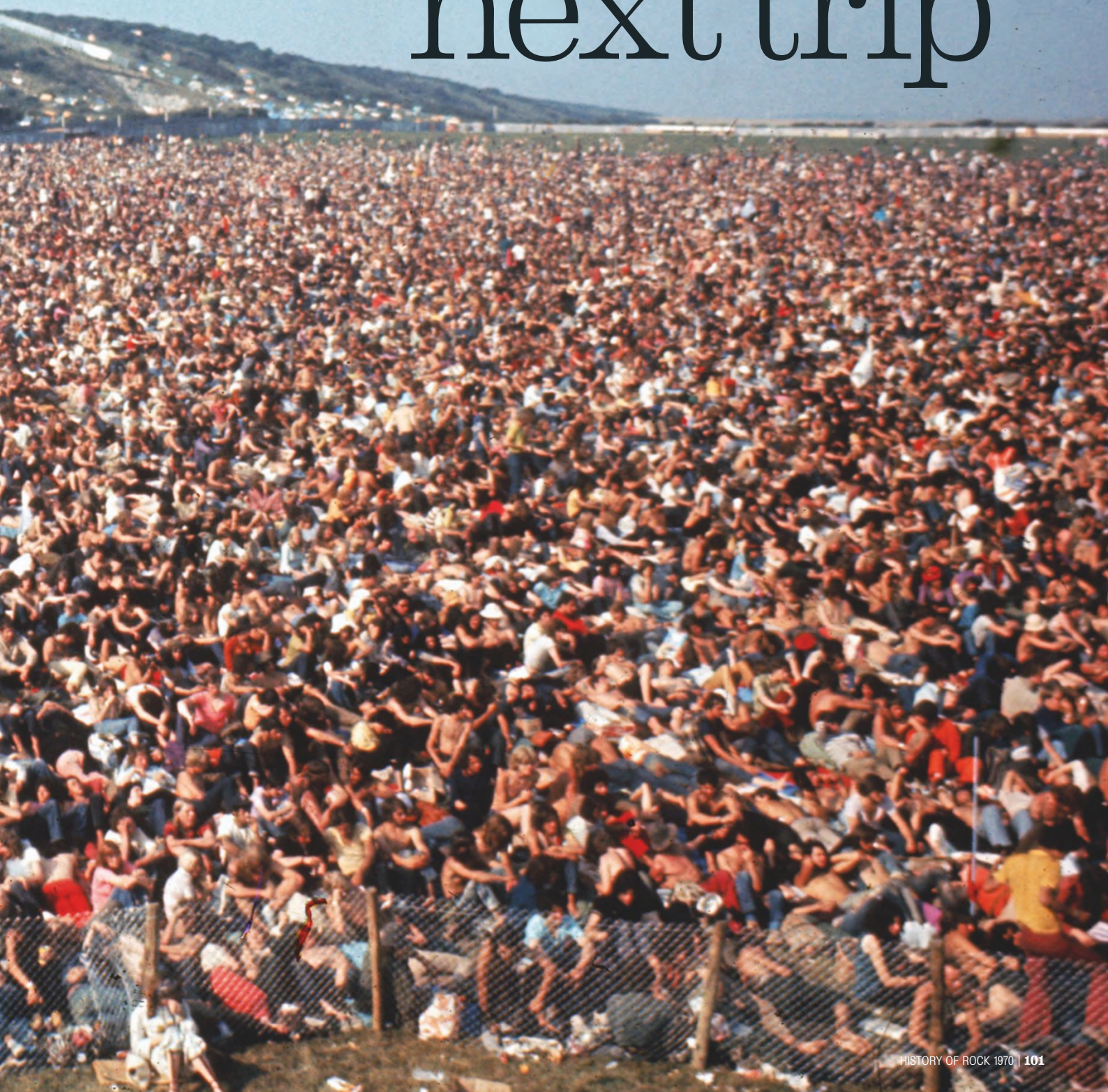


The third Isle Of Wight Festival, August 26–31, 1970: an estimated 600,000 gather to see acts ranging from prog supergroup Judas Jump, Wednesday's openers, to Richie Havens, playing as dawn breaks on Monday

GETTY

JIMI HENDRIX and LEONARD COHEN come to Britain to play the third ISLE OF WIGHT FESTIVAL. MM doesn't only draw deep insight from the two musicians – it despatches a writer to rough it with “the kids”. “I suspected my colleagues’ commiserations were not genuine,” he reports.

“Ready for the next trip”



— MM SEPT 5 —

JIMI HENDRIX, THE man with the misleading reputation that had mothers locking away young daughters when he was in town, is talking again.

After six months of hiding in corners, crawling into cracks when people were around, and generally locking himself away from the world, our Jimi is back in business, and his mind is six months pregnant with ideas.

For Jimi, the first long trip has come to an end. It's time to go back home, feed himself until he's fat again, and then set out on trip number two, which will be a longer trip, and intrepid exploration, and for Jimi a new experience.

"It's all turned full circle, I'm back right now to where I started. I've given this era of music everything. I still sound the same, my music's the same, and I can't think of anything new to add to it in its present state," Jimi told me as he sat tending an English cold in a lavish London Park Lane hotel.

"When the last American tour finished earlier this year, I just wanted to go away a while, and forget everything. I wanted to just do recording, and see if I could write something. Then I started thinking. Thinking about the future. Thinking that this era of music—sparked off by The Beatles—had come to an end. Something new has got to come, and Jimi Hendrix will be there.

"I want a big band; I don't mean three harps and 14 violins. I mean a big band full of competent musicians that I can conduct and write for. And with the music we will paint pictures of Earth and space, so that the

listener can be taken somewhere. It's going to be something that will open up a new sense in people's minds. They are getting their minds ready now. Like me, they are going back home, getting fat, and making themselves ready for the next trip."

"You see, music is so important. I don't any longer dig the pop and politics crap. That's old fashioned. It was somebody's personal opinion. But politics is old hat. Anyone can go round shaking babies by the hand, and kissing the mothers, and saying that it was groovy. But you see, you can't do this in music. Music doesn't lie. I agree it can be misinterpreted, but it cannot lie.

"When there are vast changes in the way the world goes, it's usually something like art and music that changes it. Music is going to change the world next time."

Jimi couldn't fully explain what his new music would be like, but he put forward his visions of how the next music form would be born.

"We are going to stand still for a while, and gather everything we've learned musically in the last 30 years, and we are going to blend all the ideas that worked into a new form of



Tired and beset by technical hitches, Jimi Hendrix plays in the early hours of August 31, 1970



classical music. It's going to take some doing to figure out all the things that worked, but it's going to be done.

"I dig Strauss and Wagner—those cats are good, and I think that they are going to form the background of my music. Floating in the sky about it will be blues—I've still got plenty of blues—and then there will be Western sky music, and sweet opium music [you'll have to bring your own opium] and these will be mixed together to form one.

"You know the drug scene came to a big head. It was opening up things in people's minds, giving them things that they just couldn't handle. Well, music can do that, you know, and you don't need any drugs.

"The term 'blowing someone's mind' is valid. People like you to blow their minds, but then we are going to give them something that will blow their mind, and while it's blown there will be something there to fill the gap. It's going to be a complete

form of music. It will be really druggy music. Yes, I agree it could be something on similar lines to what Pink Floyd are tackling. They don't know it, you know, but people like Pink Floyd are the mad scientists of this day and age.

"While I was doing my vanishing act in the States I got this feeling that I was completely blown out of England. I thought that they had forgotten me over here. I'd given them everything I'd got, I thought maybe they

didn't want me any more, because they had a nice set of bands. Maybe they were saying, 'Oh, we've had Hendrix, yeah he was OK.' I really thought I was completely through here."

About his future big band Jimi had talked a lot. But he was also eager to talk about thoughts on the three-piece outfit, which he believed could go on forever. "It was fun, it was the greatest fun. It was good, exciting and I enjoyed it. But the main thing that used to bug me was that people wanted too many visual things from me. I never wanted it to be so much of a visual thing. When I didn't do it, people thought I was being moody, but I can only freak when I really feel like doing so. I can't do it just for the

"We will paint pictures of Earth and space. It will open minds"

sake of it. I wanted the music to get across, so that people could just sit back and close their eyes, and know exactly what was going on, without caring a damn what we were doing while we were on stage.”

Could Jimi give any indication when he would start to form the big band? “I don’t know, but it won’t be very long. Isle of Wight might be the last, or second to last. But if the kids really enjoyed it, then it might carry on a little longer. But I will only carry on that way if I am useful; you know you have got to have a purpose in life.”

His hair is a little tamer now. Did he feel he was a tamer person, a changing person?

“No, I don’t think so, although I feel as though I get little sparks of maturity every now and then. I think of tunes, I think of riffs. I can hum them. Then there’s another melody comes into my head, and then a bass melody, and then another one. On guitar I just can’t get them out.

“I think I’m a better guitarist than I was. I’ve learned a lot. But I’ve got to learn more about music, because there’s a lot in this hair of mine that’s got to get out.

“With the bigger band, I don’t want to be playing as much guitar; I want other musicians to play my stuff. I want to be a good writer. I still can’t figure out what direction my writing is going at the moment, but it’ll find a way.

“I won’t be doing many live gigs, because I’m going to develop the sound, and then put a film out with it. It’s so exciting, it’s going to be an audio-visual thing that you sit down and plug into and really take in through your ears and eyes. I’m happy, it’s gonna be good.”

Roy Hollingworth

— MELODY MAKER SEPTEMBER 5 —

Leonard Cohen – man or myth, or what? He’s a dreamer, but as he says, his dreams are only products of real things, and fact. Basically, Leonard is a darned nice guy, shy, slow-talking, and more eager to ask you questions and listen to you than hear himself.

Talking to Leonard was a joy, because this man in not deep to the point of being far out. Obviously he’s deep if you want him to be – in your eyes that is – but if you get deepness out of your mind and just talk, then that’s good. Leonard went through what he termed an “ordeal” when he arrived in London last week. He has never been one to hold press receptions, but he agreed to attend an exceptionally small and informal party, at a Mayfair hotel, where there were no notebooks to be seen, where he just talked, and gave legitimate answers to only a few questions, and preferred to hold conversations. He survived the ordeal.

Arriving early, simply because the taxi travelled at tyre-scorching speeds, I struck good fortune, was the first to arrive in the Monte Carlo Suite, and caught Leonard completely alone.

He held his hand out, smiled, and offered me a drink, and then we talked, and talked and talked.

“Each of my songs is above me... as though it was better than me”

He is a lot smaller than you might expect, dressed simply in a bush jacket and ordinary trousers. His face holds very little expression, the muscles in it rarely move, but his eyes are dark and sparkling, and friendly. He is also blessed with an incredible sense of modesty. “So glad you like my work; it’s difficult to get it into your mind that people actually like it. It’s such a good feeling. I look on it as a conquest.

“I could never really describe myself. If I looked at myself in the third person, I don’t think I’d recognise what I saw.

I hope you can understand that. The best thing for you to do is to simply make up your opinion of me; it’s easier for you to do it than me.”

His voice is deep, and a little broken. We walked around the suite, and admired the selection of colourful goodies that lay on plates. “Please eat something, they look so good, but I’m not hungry.”

We talked about his songs.

“I really hope you can understand this. When I write a song, and it becomes a finished piece of work, to me it becomes an incredible achievement. Each one of my songs is above me. When I say above me, I mean almost as though it was better than me.

“With the books and the poems it’s a different feeling. My God, to do a song is a total mental success. Possibly people may not understand fully what the songs are about. But it’s just me singing about what I see, and how I see it. Just telling of experiences.

“I mean, let’s take ‘Sisters Of Mercy’. I was in Edmonton, Canada one evening, and I ran into these two girls. The three of us had a fine evening. They caressed my body, and touched me gently, and kissed me, and touched me and it was so fine. They made me feel good, and they were soft.”

His eyebrows raised a little, and he smiled: “How did you read the song, I’d like to know that?” I told him that my first impressions was that the song was about a brothel.

“I’m pleased about that, because that’s possibly what it really was. So there was a success, and you read the right things into it. That’s good. Those girls were very tender.”

He was a little nervous about the Isle Of Wight festival.

“There are so many people on, and so many that I want to see. I’m not a top-rank star you know. No, I’m not a top ranker.”

The conversation, beautifully casual, floated in various directions, but stayed for some while on the question of the generation gap.

“This is something that has been on my mind for a long time recently. I have thought much about it. You know what the greatest thing would be. It would be to play a concert in front of 50,000 middle-aged people. God, that would be so great.

“If we could only get together. We could share things. God, these older people really do know what they are talking about. They have wisdom. Young ideas could be mixed with them. Older people could add mature things. Oh yes, if we could get together. We must, you know, we really must.”

Leonard smiled again, and went and fetched me another drink. Through the whole period his eyes had been burning into mine, giving me that feeling that he was truly interested. It had been a remarkable talk. While he was walking back with the drinks I noticed how frail his body looked. Like his face, he restricted his limbs to minimum use.

“It’s nice just having a little party like this. I didn’t want to be interviewed; I just wanted to meet the writers over here.”

Several more people drifted into the room, and the whole party became totally relaxed as Leonard met everyone with a warmth and friendliness. He held swift conversations and smiled for most of the time.

“Maybe it wasn’t such an ordeal,” he said later. *Roy Hollingworth* •

Following Hendrix on stage, Leonard Cohen and his band the Army – backing singers Corlynn Hanney and Susan Musmannopictured – calm the restive IOW crowd



1970

JULY – SEPTEMBER

Toy figures in the distance

— ISLE OF WIGHT —
LIVE!
— AUGUST 26–30 —

MM SEPTEMBER 5 A *Maker* scribe pitches his tent for a punter's-eye view of the third IOW Festival.

Freshwater, Isle of Wight, Thursday.

ARRIVED HERE early this morning, and I am surprised to admit I am happier than I felt on Monday morning. I can still recall that sense of outrage and frustration as the editor told me (with a touch of quiet glee, I thought) that for me this year's Isle Of Wight Festival would be a groundsheet and primus stove affair, and not a hotel bed and room service as I had been fervently hoping. The idea, he explained, would be to get out and mingle with the crowd, "live their life, and soak up the atmosphere. See what it is really like to be one of the kids who have had to pay to get in," he said with relish.

Since I caught flu after the 1969 festival, I think I could have done this perfectly well without having to go through all the motions, but I didn't think he would have appreciated this line of argument, which I have to admit was rather subjective, so I went out immediately and bought a tent, an airbed and a sleeping bag.

The shopkeeper assured me that with all his gear there was little chance of getting wet if it rained, and I brightened a little, then sunk back into a gloomy cynicism as I contemplated five days of sitting snuffling in a tent while the rain beat a military tattoo on the flysheet and Mungo Jerry banged Coke tins and sang "In The Summertime".

At the risk of sounding disloyal, I had suspicions too that the commiseration of my colleagues was not entirely genuine. "I think if you are going to do it properly you ought to take as little money as possible with you, a few coppers maybe," said one, sipping judiciously at the pint I had just bought him.

But that was Monday... Today, everything has gone smoothly. I had an uneventful boat trip over from Portsmouth to Ryde, and then caught a special bus to take me the 20 miles to the festival site, which is right out in the country, with the nearest village, Freshwater, lying two miles away. It really is quite an impressive scene to the eye as the bus trundles near in the hot morning sun, spattering dust and pebbles on the young migrants who are marching along the roads like the vanguard of some invading force.

The spectator arena is a huge rectangle enclosed by corrugated sheeting, with a blue-and-white-striped stage at one end. Rising high above one flank of the arena is the slope of East Afton Down, which later achieves some notoriety as "Devastation Hill". It resembles a huge natural grandstand, and already a high proportion of the human influx is making use

A young man sleeps out in the open by his tent. He is always there and never moves

of its position overlooking the stage by pitching their tents and establishing squatters' rights.

I follow suit, and make my way past the hotdog stands, the corncob stalls, the griddle bars and all the other paraphernalia of modern catering, to the foot of The Hill, where I pitch the tent. It's not a good position, as I find out later that night because I have not allowed for the slope of the hill and when I turn over in my sleeping bag I nearly roll out under the tent sides.

No matter, the view is good: a wide panorama of the tented community that minute by minute spreads and thickens, plugging up all the green spaces with canvas shapes, nestling together for a bit of warmth and companionship. Sheets of black-and-white polythene are being stretched out over holes burrowed in the hedgerows, and right up against the main arena itself a Desolation Row is being created out of bales of straw constructed like igloos by the hippy elite, which is out to assert its superior status in this instant society.

And once you have staked your claim to a few square feet of land, then your thoughts turn to food. If you have brought a little stove then tins of beans can be heated, but most people line

up in the queues for the fish and chips, which cost three shillings, or hotdogs, two bob, if they want some warm food. The prices are quite reasonable: tea and soup are nine pence and a shilling respectively, and it is even possible to buy mutton biryani for five-and-sixpence. Everyone is filling his belly while the money is there. Tomorrow never knows.

It is fascinating to watch the proliferating hippy township. The cow towns in the Wild West or the gold-mining towns in the Australian Outback would have sprung up like this, rough and rude, with the smell of frying food mingling with the smoke from the campfires, and the sound of people knocking together their makeshift homes.

Friday

I AM WOKEN at 8am by a babble of voices around the tent. I conclude there have been new arrivals in the night while I have been sleeping snug as a bug in a rug on my airbed, which nearly cost me a lung to blow up the night before. I get smugger by the minute. In a short while I pick up my towel, soap and toothpaste and go down to the toilets, which are primitive but functional – deep trenches dug in the earth – with a notice at the entrance instructing everyone to avoid making a flood.

The queues to use the water taps are full of shuffling bleary-eyed with bits of grass





"The biggest non-conformist here would be a Gentina City bowler": festival-goers have a little stretch

sticking out of their hair. No one can resist having a peek at himself in the crude mirrors nailed on the walls of iron sheeting, looking to see if any pimples have come up overnight or rubbing a hand across a stubbly chin. We look rather a sorry lot – we who were founding a town only last night.

Outside, an alarming incident is going on in full view of everybody. A tall bearded guy, in his thirties, naked but for a pair of pale-blue briefs, says he is from the *Manchester Guardian* and he wants to liberate the festival. "Form a circle around me and we will march on Fiery Creations," he tells onlookers.

Everybody is merely amused until he knocks a drink out of someone's hand and then slaps a young black man in the face. The young black man is not amused, and they end up rolling around fighting in the rutted road. The onlookers gather thick and fast: love and peace is OK, but who can resist a good fight? The two are dragged apart, eventually, but *Manchester Guardian* still insists on his liberation tactics. "You're nuts," he is told.

The gates to the arena are opened at 11am, and straight away those who have elected to pay to get in – most of the dwellers on Devastation Hill did not bother because one could see and hear perfectly from up there – bore down on the entrance, loaded up with the provisions they will need for the long day and

night ahead. Once inside the arena, everyone races like mad across the field to the end by the stage, hoping to get a plum spot just behind the press enclosure.

Latecomers and the unlucky ones have to worm their way towards the front, keeping an eagle eye open for two or three feet of ground that is not covered by a sleeping bag, and in that bag a body fighting to retain that strip of precious earth.

Looking around, the whole field is planted with flags and pennants of various countries and varieties, from the three-legged design of the Isle Of Man to the Angels' swastika. They flutter bravely in the wind, resembling a scene from an ancient field of battle, a knights' tournament, except that chivalry does not enter into it. Maidens have to fight for their strip of ground like everyone else.

In-between the music laid on by the artists, there are records and announcements by the comperes, Rikki Farr, Jeff Dexter and Andy Dunkley. An American girl has lost a brown shoulder bag containing £250 and her passport – will anybody who finds it bring it to the back of the stage; or Elizabeth X please go to the Release tent, where Dave Y is waiting.

Farr and Dexter – particularly Farr – adopt a sort of elder brother style, scolding the crowd when it gets a bit out of line, giving everyone a verbal

pat on the head when they have done as they have been told – "You're beautiful, you know that," Farr tells them. He is fair-haired, heavily built, with a spreading paunch that belies the fact he is still in his twenties, while Dexter has a furry, pinched face, with rimless spectacles and thin blond hair that he keeps dead straight. Curiously, he used to sing "The Twist" with Cyril Stapleton.

Saturday

HEAR THAT 135 people have been busted for drug possession and that this huge audience which is here now – 600,000 – has raised £2,000 to get them out of prison. In relation to its size, there are no more drugs at this festival than at any other that has been held in Britain.

Maybe drugs explain the condition of the young man who sleeps out in the open beside his tent. He is always there, never moves, and huddled in his thin blanket and coat, which he wraps around him even at the height of the midday sun. The only noise he ever makes is a peculiar grunting sound. He is a bedraggled-looking wretch, but then most of us seem to be

showing signs of wear and tear – the hair greasier, more lank, signs of tiredness showing under the eyes, the clothes scruffier. It is curious, though, despite the hip clothes, the fringed coats and the weird hats, how alike we all look. The biggest non-conformist here would be a Gentina City bowler.

There are a lot of stories going around about how the Free Festival Movement, together with French and Algerian agitators, are trying to break up the festival. They have pulled down part of the fencing at the entrance, and there have been unsuccessful attempts to spike the water supply.

Sunday

THE LAST DAY, and I cannot say I am sorry, although musically it has been excellent, with my only criticism on this score being that on the Thursday and Friday the sound was muzzy and distorted, and often could not be heard at the back of the arena.

No, it is to do more with festivals as events. To spend nearly an entire 24 hours sitting in the middle of a field produces an amalgam of boredom, discomfort and a sense of esprit de corps. It is boring and uncomfortable because festivals are such passive exercises, and enforced passivity at that. If you are hemmed in by all those people, with the artists on the stage just toy figures in the distance, the feeling of restriction is all-engulfing.

Conversely, it is an imprisonment that brings with it a sense of togetherness, with music as the common denominator, to which we can all relate. But then perhaps we put too intellectual a significance on these festivals, and particularly those at the Isle Of Wight, seeing them as sort of spiritual reunions, annual gatherings at which the batteries can be recharged for the year ahead and all the business of student protest, political demos, etc. It might be getting nearer the mark if the Isle Of Wight Festival was regarded less piously, more as the younger generation's equivalent of a mass outing to Butlin's.

It does not seem to me, anyhow, that there is such a fervent atmosphere this year as last. Festivals then were something of a novelty; now they are finding their level as a form of mass communication. By midday, indeed, thousands are queueing for the buses to transport them to the boats back to the mainland, although the day's music has hardly begun. To be honest, some are frightened they will be stranded on the island without any money, but there is a general air of shut-down.

But if the festival is closing down, there are still enough of us left to sit through Jimi Hendrix, Joan Baez, Leonard Cohen and Richie Havens in the chill night before we pick up our bedrolls and head back to where we all came from. And what better way to spend an autumn evening than in such company. *Michael Watts*

Isle never be the same again

“The violence is just in us”

— MELODY MAKER SEPTEMBER 19 —

BLACK SABBATH ARE, and always will remain, in the public's eye a dark, satanic band, for their music is dark and heavy to the point of being morbid. Yet they have a name, a name that is getting big headlines, and a name that is selling LPs and singles at a fast rate.

Paranoid, an LP released last week without the band knowing it, is, as the name suggests, a heavy, riff-ridden noise that appeals to the already cauliflowered ears of many a person. Like the satanic mills of yesteryear, Sabbath are churning out heavy material by the yard—in fact, by the mile. In these days—days that are being described as the start of the turning point in pop music—what future exists for a totally heavy outfit?

As far as Sabbath are concerned, everything exists for them, in a heavy sort of way. Sabbath speak seemingly through one mouth, owned by the four of them—John Osbourne (vocals and harmonica), Tony Iommi (guitar), Geezer Butler (bass) and Bill Ward (drums). Every question is answered by all four; there is no real spokesman, although Iommi is the easiest to understand.

“We all like heavy music, and we feel that it's going to go on for ever and ever. You can drive a lot home with heavy stuff, get into »

Occult intrigues behind them, **BLACK SABBATH** concentrate on becoming the year's rock phenomenon. Written in five minutes, their single “Paranoid” is a massive hit. As chaos mounts on a UK tour, Ozzy Osbourne (and his brother) keep track of business. “We'd better sort the money before we go on,” says Ozzy. “Can you pay us in cash?”

December 12, 1970:
Ozzy Osbourne on
stage at the KB Hallen,
Denmark during the
Paranoid tour



1970

JULY – SEPTEMBER

Speed and force

NME SEPT 26 Ozzy Osbourne talks readers through Sabbath's second LP.

BLACK SABBATH TURN out a gutsy, "sock 'em all the time" type of music which is never pretentious and the album is a good example of what they're doing on stage. The speed and force of the music is sustained throughout, Terry Butler's bass and Tony Iommi's lead guitar forcing the numbers along while drummer Bill Ward puts down a solid foundation. Ozzy played me their new *Vertigo* album (42s 6d) and talked about the tracks. Here's what he had to say:

War Pigs

"It's about VIP people who are sitting there saying 'Go out and fight' and all the everyday people are forced to, but the VIPs never do. We're not a political group, it's just that most of our songs have messages."

Paranoid

"This is about a guy who has a hang-up with chicks. It's got a heavy riff. We're not a single group and after the first single, which we didn't like, we just wrote this in the studio and now it's starting to sell."

Planet Caravan

"We wrote this in the studio as well. We decided to vary the album more by having a soft number. It's a smoky jazz club number about someone going

through space and seeing stars and things."

Iron Man

"This is about a guy who invented a time machine and he goes through time and finds the world is going to end. Coming back, he turns to iron and people won't listen to him, they think he's not real. He goes a bit barmy and decides to get his revenge by killing people. He tries to do good but in the end it turns into bad."

Electric Funeral

"In years to come, the way things are going, there's going to be a nuclear war, which is what this track's about. There's a lot of evil in the world today."

Hand Of Doom

"It's about people on drugs and what happens to them – their skin turning green and things. There's a lot of gory words, but we've seen a lot of people like that and it's getting out of all proportion. If you can frighten people with words it's better than letting them find out by trying drugs. I'm not trying to say we're angels, I've indulged to a certain extent, but I'd never try any of the hard drugs or trips or anything."

Fairies Wear Boots

"Again, it's a warning about the use of drugs." *Richard Green*



what you mean to say and we are totally satisfied with the way the sound is going," drawled Iommi.

Sabbath do not plan their music. They prepare very little. Their music comes from the immediate mood on them at that time – it must be a sad world they live in – but nevertheless, they just start playing, and go on. *Paranoid* was an album that took only a matter of hours to produce. "It was all just an instant thing, spontaneous, if you like; there was little written down. It was all in our heads, and came out as one," he continued.

A dark, satanic coffee arrived, the atmosphere became just a little lighter, but it was still all too uncomfortable. "Audience reaction gets better and better, and we get more excited with the success that seems to be coming. Yet people still expect us to sacrifice virgins, and occult things like that, which if we say it once, we say it a thousand times, was never anything to do with us."

While I was with them, the band were told that a Black Sabbath parade had recently been held in the States, with thousands of people taking part, and apparently hyping the band to no small extent. Large sections of America had met the news that Sabbath were doing an October tour with wild cries of "great". The band took it all in a rather cool, heavy way. "We haven't done the States before, and we are looking forward to it with interest," said Tony – and the rest of the group. They are also looking forward to a large European tour. They have done good business across the Channel, and know they can do more. *Roy Hollingworth*

— NME SEPTEMBER 26 —

BECAUSE OF THE nature of the group's name, people tend to associate Black Sabbath with witchcraft. This is an understandable misconception, but one which should be put straight – the Birmingham quartet has nothing whatsoever to do with slaying cockerels and goats. Making their *NME* chart debut this week at No 26 with "Paranoid" – the title track of their new album – Black Sabbath are pretty fed up with the tag and lead singer Ozzy Osbourne met me at his manager's office to set the record straight.

"A lot of people have a grudge against us because of this black magic thing, but it has got out of all proportion. At one time we got so confused with Black Widow it was unbelievable, though I understand that Black Widow are getting out of black magic now. We're two completely different bands in music and everything," he began.

"All the tracks on the first album were a warning against black magic. You get old business tycoons wanting to go with young chicks, so they go along to black magic rituals and get themselves involved... things like that, they're sick. I believe in black magic but I've not tried it and I won't."

The black magic thing caused a lot of worries for Black Sabbath when going to America was mentioned. Ozzy explained, "It frightened us because of the Sharon Tate murder and we got very uptight that people would expect us to go on stage and turn people into frogs and things."

He laughs about it now but at the time it wasn't funny. Ozzy finds that people realise what the group are once they've seen them and he's more than pleased that they're starting to break big at last. "We used to be called Earth," he revealed. "We were just bumming round the country for two years like a lot of other groups and when things started happening we thought maybe it was our turn. All that sweat has now paid off. As long as people want to listen to Black Sabbath we'll be around."

"It's unbelievable on the Continent. We've just finished a tour and every night we were getting two or three ovations. Up until the last tour we were going down well but there was a thing that just wasn't there. At one time I just wanted to get a record in the charts and when we did it was amazing. It's not changed any of us; we just want to go on playing good music and making people happy."

Ozzy sat chain smoking and not holding back on his language, much of which was fruity. He makes use of expletives to emphasise points, most of which are good sense, and he has strong views on things like drugs and groups who have no time for other people when they've made the big time.

When he talks about Black Sabbath's music, he is just as enthusiastic but he tends to get worked up in a quieter way: "We got so fed up hearing stories about love that we decided to write about what's going on in life around people. If we start writing now for the next album, by the time it comes up we may have a lot of good tracks or we may have a load of numbers we don't like, so we leave it till the last moment. We're pretty quick at writing. Tony thinks of a riff or a melody and we write round that usually. We try to blend our music instead of getting the same monotonous riff. We like a lot of tempo changes so that it doesn't get on people's nerves."





"It frightened us because of the Sharon Tate murder": Ozzy on the band's apprehension when a US tour was mooted

— NME OCTOBER 24 —

WHILE BLACK SABBATH have always hoped that they would someday achieve the measure of success that they now have, things happened so quickly just lately that they were almost taken by surprise. Their second album swept to the top of the chart very quickly and the single hasn't lost any time making No 4.

Lead guitarist Tony Iommi and drummer Bill Ward were understandably happy when I took them the news of the album reaching No 1, but they admitted that they hadn't been sure it would happen.

"We've always wanted this," Tony said, "but we had no publicity to talk of after the first album and I think people who bought it may have bought the second to see what it was like. It's hard to explain what has made us popular. I suppose people have heard us and talked about us, it's been word of mouth."

The album was rehearsed in a small studio in a farm in Wales and some rough takes of various tracks were recorded there so that the group could get an idea of what they would sound like later. "We did 'Iron Man' and 'Funeral' there," Bill revealed. "Quite a few groups use the place and now there's talk of building an airstrip so that groups can fly in."

Tony pointed out that most of the group's songs are written in the same way. "We get the heavy riff and things and Geezer writes the words to go with the backing. He writes raw words to go with raw music. We were just messing about with the tapes after dinner and thought 'Paranoid' would be a good single. It wasn't written as a single, we never intend to do that. We thought we weren't going to do another after the first flop. It only took five minutes to write 'Paranoid'."

"It's amazing how the album's going, really. We did a John Peel show and started getting gigs

after that. He helped us a lot, but he seems to be against us now. I don't know what we've done. He keeps having digs at us. Some of the tracks on the album are definite put-downs of things. 'War Pigs' is anti the people who cause wars and then don't fight themselves and 'Hand Of Doom' warns about the use of drugs."

Despite this, the group don't consider themselves to be any sort of gurus. "One of the biggest problems with the music scene today is the kids that try and read things into songs; they always try and interpret lyrics and they often create things that aren't there," Tony explained. "Our music is simple, basic stuff; the lyrics are plain, laid on a plate, and you can't misunderstand them."

"With those kids it's like a big battle with the mind trying to sort things out. We haven't got the power to try and direct people in politics or anything else," added Bill. "'War Pigs' and the drug songs are just our opinions. We're not trying to influence people. We don't know if people take it all in."

The second album is quite a change from the first and there may be another switch before the third. "I don't know what we'll get into in the

next six months," Tony admitted. "That's something you can't say. When we did the first album we didn't know what the second was going to be like. When we have to go into the studio we'll work something out."

Tony used to be a member of Jethro Tull, so I asked him how he regarded showmanship in groups. Did he think it was ever used as a substitute for good music or was it just a thing that various artists found necessary to do?

"It is used to get people to look," he replied. "We couldn't do it. Ozzy leaps about a bit and people remember him for his head going up and down like the clappers but that's all. It's entertainment really. Groups go on and smash »

"John Peel helped us a lot, but he seems to be against us now"



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equipment up, people like to see violence on stage. I've only done it out of annoyance when something's gone wrong. I wouldn't do it as an act."

Bill recalled a gig in Cologne when the power was cut off in the middle of a number "probably because a caretaker wanted to go home" and gave that as an example of the sort of thing that upsets the group and sometimes makes them violent. "I was going to put my guitar through the cabinet," Tony said. "They put the lights on in the middle of a number as well. But generally I don't think playing loud and raw music makes the audience violent. The only violence we get at shows is when we start it on stage."

"Sometimes the audiences get stirred up, and that's great. We get excited on some numbers, I do a classical bit and if someone talks loud I get annoyed and we all get annoyed, the violence is just in us."

Black Sabbath have pretty much the same type of audience whenever they play and they've never really experienced the teenybopper bit, though having a hit single brought

them close to it recently. "The only audience we see are about 16 to 25," Tony told me. "When we got a single in the charts we thought we'd meet up with a lot of people who came along because of that. We did a Top Rank place in Cardiff and we were a bit dubious about it, but it was OK. Seventy-five per cent were our normal audience, but we got about four giggling girls hanging about like we were a teens-type group!"

The group used to be called Earth and the music was nothing like it is now. A change had to be made and Tony went through what led up to it and what happened next. "We kept that name for six months but there was another band with the same name and we had to change," he began. "We wrote a number called Black Sabbath and Geezer said it would be a good name for a group, so we thought about it and agreed with him. We had started coming out with mad names like Joe Leg!"

"We couldn't keep playing 12 bars; we just got fed up with Earth music. It was jazz-blues stuff. It was good for practice but nothing else; a lot of other groups were playing the same thing. When we changed the whole thing just snowballed. We wanted something loud that people would listen to."

"We'd got to the stage where we couldn't even afford a bus; we had to walk to each other's houses. It's the usual hard-luck story but true. We started recording the first album about four months after we changed the name and things picked up from there."

The first London gig the group did was at the Marquee and they all felt nervous. Tony says that London scared them at first. He thought it was so big that you could die and nobody would even notice. Then there were a few festivals, which helped matters.

"But festivals have so many backstage hassles to put up with as well – all the groups are fighting to get their equipment on and off stage at the same time. In Germany they seem to have festivals every week. People just go along and sit there, not enjoying themselves. It's better playing here because if people learn the words they can take part in the songs."

Tony and Bill had to leave then and they admitted that the big city had got them again and they hadn't a clue how to get to where they were going. "We have to take taxis everywhere; we'll go broke at this rate!" Bill joked. *Richard Green*

— MELODY MAKER OCTOBER 31 —

BLACKSABBATH MANIA has broken out, and the result is far from what the group want. Since "Paranoid" made the hit parade they have become a victim of fan worship, and whereas once their audiences came to listen, now most of them go to look and hope that they will be lucky enough to touch one of their newly won idols, or maybe collect a broken guitar string or drumstick to add to their collection of group paraphernalia.

I spent the day with Black Sabbath on Friday, and saw the effects of fan worship on a group that were not prepared for it and don't, for that matter, want it. They were playing at the Mayfair Ballroom in Newcastle, a 200-mile five-hour car drive from Birmingham, where the group is based. The road to the hall was swarming with young people, queuing to get in. The driver jumped out of the car to find out where the stage door was, and the car was soon lost in the midst of a crowd of teenagers, while another section of the crowd were having a whale of a time kicking a policeman's face in.

Inside the hall, the audience turned out to be on the young side, and for the most part horribly drunk. Talking to a girl in the ballroom later, she informed me that there is not much to do in Newcastle and consequently the kids spend most of their leisure time getting drunk or stoned. The changing room turned out to be the committee room, with a large table and chairs, a cocktail cabinet and coat stand, but nothing useful like a washbasin or a mirror. The promoter turns out to be all smiles, telling us that beer is on the way, but with sore throats and runny noses, orange juice and cokes are more in demand and he promises those too.

"How many people are you expecting?" asks Sabbath's Ozzy, a shrewd businessman, thinking of their 63 per cent of the gate money. The promoter explains that there will be only 2,100 in the hall: "1,800 have tickets, and we will allow 300 in from the street to save a riot out there."

Performance time draws near, and Geezer, Tony and Bill decide to change into their stage clothes, when Ozzy's brother arrives in

Stamping, yelling

NME OCT 31 "Unprecedented scenes" as Sabbath storm London's South Bank.

PAGANINI WOULD TURN in his grave if he even thought that a group like Black Sabbath were playing at the Royal Festival Hall, and if his ghost was lurking there on Monday night it was probably exorcised at the sight of thousands of young people going berserk. Such was the fervour of the fans that the stewards gave up and let them dance in the aisles and rush the stage.

After Monday's spectacle there can be absolutely no doubt that Sabbath is among Britain's top groups. Forced by hordes of stamping, clapping, yelling fans who had no intention of leaving without an encore, the group returned for "Fairies Wear Boots" and created unprecedented scenes. The best part of the audience was on its feet clapping its hands in the air; a goodly crowd was dancing at the front of the stage. Peace signs were being given all over the place and even a real live teddy boy was bopping in best '50s tradition. In the end, the house lights had to be turned on to stop the show.

Strangely, Sabbath began with "Paranoid" and worked through to "War Pigs", when Ozzy Osbourne freaked out and Tony Iommi played a splendid lead guitar solo. "Iron Man" had the audience clapping in time and saw the emergence of the first dancers, then it was into the number from which the group took its name. It began in a style quite out of character with Sabbath's music with Iommi playing classical electric guitar, then all hell breaks loose and a Quatermass-like rhythm takes over – at any time you expect to see horrible demons crawl over the top of the amps.

The penultimate number, "Wicked World", is a complete raver taken at a furious pace, drummer Bill Ward having a field day. The full house loved it and sent waves of ecstatic appreciation flowing round the hall. No group could have wished for a better send-off for an American tour which begins this weekend. *Richard Green*



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No longer Small with the addition of Rod Stewart and Ronnie Wood, The Faces are "a heavy live injection into the scene"

GETTY



“We’re just a group of duds”

Self-mockingly, and a little drunk, **THE FACES** arrive. They play music for people about town, and survive on charm, talent and not a little luck. Might it all unravel before it gets going? “Don’t worry,” says Ronnie Lane. “My dad’s going to run us down to the bookings in his van.”

— MELODY MAKER FEBRUARY 21 —

A SOUND NOT UNLIKE a braying mountain goat echoed across the West End of London this week. The Faces – no longer Small – were back in town. Full of boundless energy, the group have heightened their appeal with the addition of Long Rod Stewart and Rocky Ronnie Wood.

Since the split with Steve Marriott, who went liggig off with Humble Pie, there has been a confused silence from the lads. Kenny Jones was doing sessions, Ian McLagan was blowing up his Mini and Ronnie Lane was busy bopping. This much we knew. But in semi-secrecy they have been – wait for it – getting it together! And a fine new album and single they have produced, too; if “Flying”, their new single, is any indication, The Faces will be a heavy live injection into the scene. And listening to some of their album tracks this week showed they have retained a lot of the old group’s feel for grooving and humour. One of the best rhythm sections in British rock is the drum, bass and organ sound of Mac, Ronnie and Kenny, and with the addition of wonder vocalist Rod, late of Jeff Beck, and the guitar wizardry of Ronnie Wood, the band are looking good.

The goatlike noises frequently emitted by the entire group were a little unnerving as Mac drove across London in a hired Cortina from boozier to record company office to hear the album. The record company were pretty unnerved when the master tape mysteriously snapped as they were about to play it back.

“Oh vee,” said Ronnie Lane, or words to that effect.

While we waited for a ruffled technician to complete a tape surgery operation, Rod and the lads chatted, groaned and yelled about their return to active pop life.

“I just got back from the States,” said Rod. “But I did my solo album here with people like Keith Emerson, Mac and Ronnie Wood. After Jeff Beck’s LPs you couldn’t get any heavier than that, so I have done a few softer things. It’s been out in the States about two months and got good reviews.”

GETTY



How about the Faces LP? “We’ve finished it and there should be a release on February 27,” said Kenny. “The new group has done about six gigs so far and they were really good. The band is nothing like the old Faces. Only the name is the same. The music is completely different. Some of us wanted to change the name of the group completely, so we all agreed to keep it as The Faces, without the Small bit. At the gigs the kids have been expecting old material. They don’t really know what to expect. We’ve got to get together a bit more, but gigs have been really exciting.”

Said Rod, “The first couple of gigs were a bit rough, but you can’t expect anything else really. Led Zeppelin on their first gigs were bad. We just need a bit of time.”

Said Ken, “We’ve been rehearsing five or six hours a night in a warehouse in South London. In a way I’m glad the old group split, because it gave us all a chance to do something new. I miss a few things here and there, but we’re not complaining.

What will their new image be? “Well,” said Mac, “it’s going to be more of a blues and psychedelic jazz-rock and folk image with a bit of a classical beat.”

“We’ll be playing for the kind of people who go to the Speak,” said R Lane, tapping his baseball boots to a boogaloo beat. “And the Crom, Bag, Rev and Blay.” These, it should be explained, are the names of certain discotheques. “We have been playing the colleges, but as nobody has heard the album yet, they are not sure of the numbers. I think they expect we’ll play ‘Sha La La La Lee’.

“But don’t worry. We’ll get the band going alright. Me dad is going to run us down to the bookings in his van. And we’re going to get some cards printed. And we are going to put an ad in the *MM* under ‘An Able Band Available’. We were thinking of calling the band Slim Chance, or Blind Drunk. Super group? No! We’re just a group of duds.”

The album, with tracks like “Pineapple And The Monkey” – a most grooving instrumental – and “Around The Plynth” by Ronnie Wood and Rod, have a happy but funky sound. The Faces may send themselves up quite cheerfully, but they can also be proud of a fine new band that takes music, at least, very seriously. *Chris Welch*

— MELODY MAKER JULY 4 —

“SORRY IT’S NOT a lim,” apologised Ronald Lane, Face and bass player. He was referring to his battered Volkswagen as he drove up and down Fleet Street looking for somewhere to park. Limousines don’t always come easy, even if one has been a pop star for six years. Ronnie Lane at 24 has a flat in Richmond, a motor and a gig. “And I’m very lucky.”

When the Small Faces were at their peak in happy teenybop days, Ronnie rivalled Steve Marriott for popularity. He has experienced the unreality of a kind of stardom. He has worked hard and accepted setbacks. As a young veteran he can look at the music scene with amused irreverence. The phrase “underground” will draw a groan and hearty laughter, and more apologies for appearing cynical.

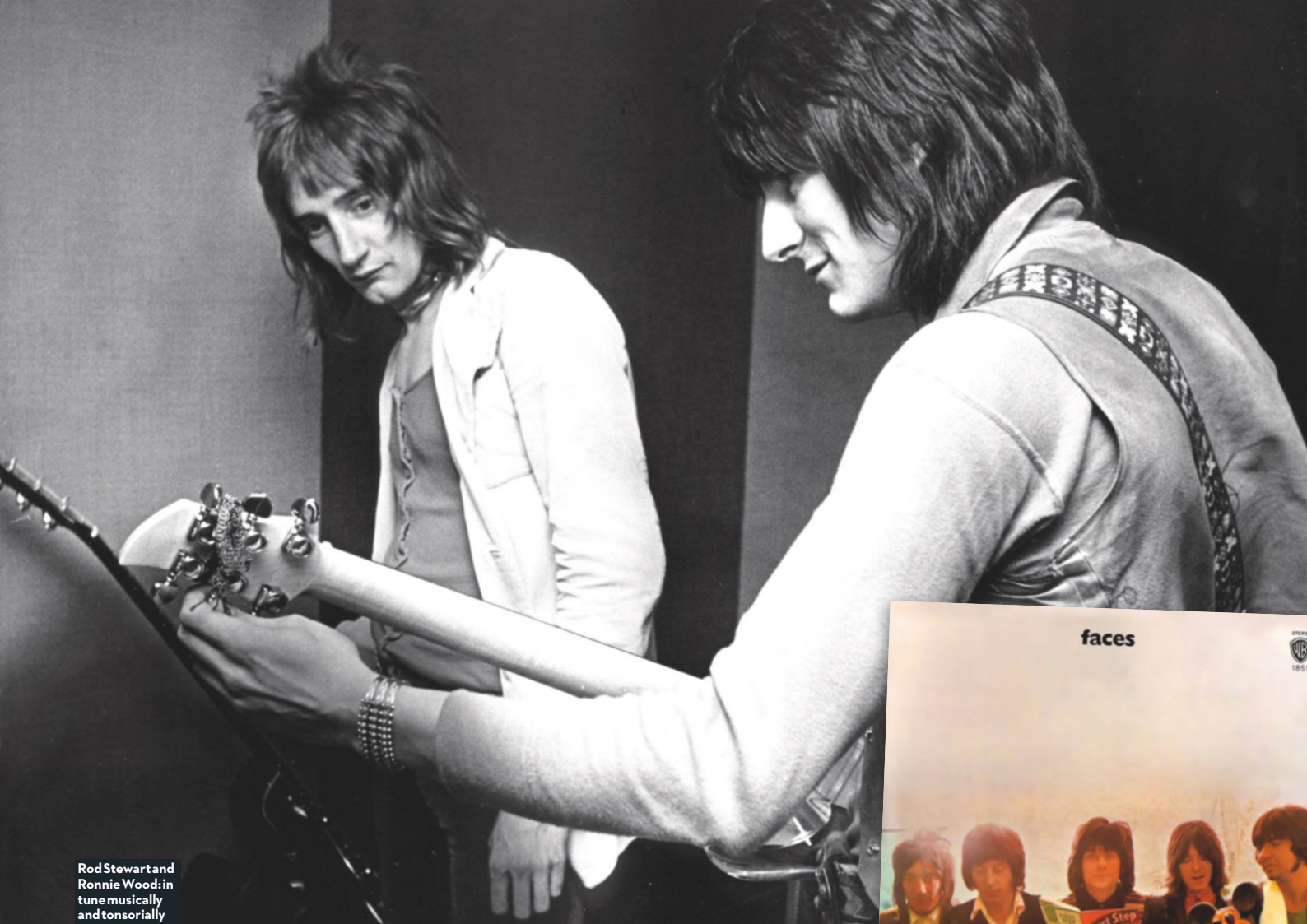
Ronnie is from the East End of London, where duffings up are not infrequent. He has quaint memories of trolley buses emptying their used-ticket boxes into the streets and losing contact with the overhead wires. And he remembers being attacked and threatened, by fellow captives of the environment from which he was finally sprung by the phenomenon of the group. He retains his natural energy and humour, always a hallmark of the old Faces, so often mistaken for arrogance by the humourless and dull.

The Faces, which now feature Rod Stewart, Ronnie Wood, Kenny Jones and Ian McLagan, recently returned from their first trip to the USA, where they did considerably better than they have – so far – at home. “The tour didn’t half go on a long whole,” said Ron, allowing himself the luxury of a cigar. “Ten weeks – it was too long. But it was a great experience.”

What were your impressions...? “No – it’s all been said before about the States. It IS quite an uptight place, and the audience ARE bloody good. And that’s all been said before.”

Was the trip worthwhile? “Oh yeah – you’re joking. Rod has got two solo albums in the chart in the States at the moment and out LP is doing quite nicely thank you. The tour did us a lot of good in different ways. We found out we could all live together for 10 weeks – which was a bit of a killer. And all the regular playing made us much tighter.

“We wrote a lot of songs and started to record a couple of tracks on the West Coast. We’ve settled down as a band now, and I think our



Rod Stewart and Ronnie Wood: in tune musically and torsorially

next LP will be much fresher than the last one. On the other one, we had had spent six months rehearsing all the songs. That was all we had to do beforehand, so we knew all the numbers backwards, which made them sound a bit stale. That was a major fault of the first album. But it's done well in the States, and so has our single 'Around The Plinth'."

What's a plinth? "Oh, it's just a word. We like to say stupid words—you say it 'plynth'." Er—plynth.

"You see—it's a very thin word. The single wasn't a hit but it did OK. It was easier for us in the States than here. We did some really good gigs, and just a couple of bad ones. We don't like to put on a lot of front—we just like to go on and ball. I think that surprised them. We've done some really dud gigs since we got back. We were used to using some great gear in the States and when we got back we had to use our rotten old stuff—all loaded into my dad's Zephyr.

"We did one really dud show... Oh dear, how embarrassing... It's just that the spirit had gone out of us, so we didn't enjoy it any more. It's not a case of being nervous—not with that lot around you.

"We are out to enjoy ourselves, but a lot of groups and audiences take themselves far too seriously. Everybody is trying to be so cool. Even the students are duds sometimes—'Oh yeah, entertain us.' It's heart-rending when all the lads get specially drunk and we go onstage and it's like walking into a fridge. Really the band isn't going in England, is it? It will take a bit of hard work, I suppose. We seem to be slipping up."

Do the group have a publicist?

"No. Could do, I suppose... but I can't see the lads walking down Carnaby Street leading alligators any more."

Could their lack of home impact be caused by some state of laissez-faire? "What does that mean?" Er—laziness.

"Not really. I suppose we are lazy about business things, like kids at school not doing their homework, but we are not lazy when it comes to writing songs and playing. No laziness. We like to play. Most of our numbers are originals, except for the odd tune. How can you

describe it? I suppose it's heavy psychedelic."

Mr Lane peered at me with a deadly earnest expression.

"Basically it's rock'n'roll—course it is. I suppose our roots are in the old Stax and Otis Redding records. They are still guv'nor sounds. Those were exciting times, when Motown and Stax were happening, and the Stones and The Who came along."

The Faces have been through quite a few hectic scenes in their time, not the least being the Great Trip of '67. They can be forgiven, when latterday "hippies" put them down, for feeling wryly amused.

"All those people still believe in that. We came out of it years ago and know what a load of crap it all is. We were getting a bit boisterous in a dressing room with an 'underground' group recently—clowning about a bit, I suppose. As we were going somebody head them say, 'What a lot of East End tarts—they don't know where it's at.' But I dig being really gross now and then."

As Ronald rescued his VW from a side street, he discovered a ticket on the windscreen, thoughtfully provided by the City Fathers in their "Make Life Hell For Motorists" campaign.

"Try not to put us down—we're only East End tarts who don't know where it's at." Ronnie smiled and drove home. *Chris Welch*



"The band isn't going in England, is it? We seem to be slipping up"

— NME OCTOBER 3 —

KNOWN WHEREVER MUSICIANS gather as an outstanding talent and a veritable character too, Rod Stewart's has been a chequered if, as yet, not totally satisfying career. First stretching his lungs with Jimmy Powell & The Dimensions, then to lurk in the shadows of Driscoll and Baldry with Steam Packet, followed by Shotgun Express and a promising episode with the highly chequered Jeff Beck, Stewart as viewed by Britain has always seemed to be hovering on the fringes of greatness, often looking »

CHRIS WALTER

likely to but never quite receiving his just desserts. 1970 sees him pursuing a double-sided career of equal promise, with the re-formed Faces and as a recording solo singer, and if this year does any good at all it might just be welling up to thrust that long-overdue greatness upon Rod Still Very Much The Mod. Having matured immensely as a vocalist and songwriter since his early days, Stewart is today singing better than he's ever done; his second solo LP, *Gasoline Alley*, being without doubt a landmark in his career.

"The album's done a quarter of a million in the States," reported Stewart gleefully when we met at his publicist's Denmark Street offices, his unmistakable face being on view, as I arrived, peering from a top-floor window at the towing away of this illegally parked white sports car.

Under contract as a soloist to do three albums a year for Mercury – "but they'll settle for two" – and three with the Faces for Warner-Reprise – "they'll settle for two too" – Stewart is adamant that the group comes first but adds that the solo work "really is a welcome outlet. It wouldn't work if it was a chore, because if it was something I had to do I would just stick anything on it to fill it up and get it out of the way."

In contrast to The Faces' *First Step* album, which involved a good deal of labouring and recording, *Gasoline Alley* was a rushed job; Rod putting that down as one of the reasons why it worked out so well. "The whole album was written, conceived and recorded in two weeks, just before we left for the first Faces tour of the States. I finished mixing it at two o'clock on a Tuesday morning and was off to America at eight the next day."

Of the sessions, he points out, "With The Faces it's five guys who have equal say, but on my own it's just my responsibility. On a group album I couldn't tell Mac what to play, but I can when it's my own album. That is probably why I got my album done so quickly and the first Faces album took so long. I think Mac and Ronnie Wood play better together on *Gasoline Alley*. On *First Step* they were too fussy; they wanted to do things over and over again."

The back-up musicians on *Gasoline Alley* do indeed play incredibly well, and Stewart is only fair in according them the praise that it is as much their album as his. Yet it needs to be pointed out, as the British sleeve is so woefully short of information, that in fact the bulk of the work on the LP was done by Ronnie Wood, from Beck's group and now with Stewart in The Faces, guitarist Martin Quittenton, formerly of Steamhammer, and Rod's old pal drummer Micky Waller. Ian McLagan, Kenny Jones and Ronnie Laine play on only two of the tracks, "My Way Of Giving" and "I Don't Want To Discuss It".

Full of praise for Quittenton, Stewart says, "He has the most incredible collection of chords; he'd just knock everybody out in the studio with what he'd come up with. It's sad, because I think he's selling ice-cream in Bournemouth at the moment."

Rod agrees that when he left Beck he might have found it easier going it alone with his own band than joining The Faces and beginning what all concerned recognised would be an uphill struggle in Britain to live down Small Faces associations.

"When I did the first solo album, Ronnie Wood and I could have got a band together with Micky Waller, but it couldn't happen. I am very lazy; I wouldn't like the responsibility of my own group. I am pressurised by the record company to get a band together but I never will."

"As for The Faces, I always thought they could do well in the States – and we have – because they had never been there before. I thought we could make it there as a fivesome and then it would take a bit longer in this country. But we've just done three London gigs and they've all brought us up. I think we're playing now to a different generation from when the Faces were doing 'Lazy Sunday'. And apart from all that, Ronnie, Mac and Kenny are such great guys. They really are."

Stewart retains mixed memories of his former guvnor, Jeff Beck, although he recognises the debt he owes his band, particularly in

America: "Everybody said that Beck disbanded. The press said that, but we didn't disband. Ronnie Wood had been sacked by Beck and re-joined. One night, Carmine Appice and Tim Bogert from the Fudge phoned and said they wanted to get a group together with us. It was going to be the two Fudge, Beck and me. The press got it the wrong way round, but they did help us towards the end because I kept reading stories about what Beck was up to and they were all wrong."

It was the opportunity to join The Faces that forestalled the Fudge liaison. "That was a challenge, The Faces. I couldn't resist it," Stewart recalls. "Beck is still looking for a bass player and singer. He was silly, because he had a great band there. He's never going to find a better bass player than Ronnie Wood, for instance."

Things might have been drastically different had the Beck group played what was due to be their last gig, the Woodstock Festival. "We blew it and never went," remembers Stewart ruefully. "We'd been doing two festivals a week there at that time and we just thought, 'Oh, another festival.' We blew it because we must have made the film – we were bigger than Cocker. That must be one of the biggest regrets of my life – and Beck's."

As a singer, Stewart puts his influences down to a combination of Rambling Jack Elliott and Sam Cooke, and admits, "When I was 19/20, I was trying to sound like a black guy – I must own up. But I am not now, because I do not know any other way to sing. I never really felt at home as a blues singer... with the things Beck was doing. With The Faces I do. This is really the best move I ever made."

"In The Faces we can tell each other when things are wrong. If Ronnie Wood is playing too loud we can tell him. You couldn't say that with Beck – you'd get your throat cut." Nick Logan

— NME DECEMBER 19 —

"HAD ME A Real Good Time", apart from being a rollickingly good single, could almost be a kind of policy statement or working maxim for The Faces. Though their British gigs to date can be counted on two hands, they have



built for themselves an enviable reputation as a hotly unpretentious band disposed to spreading smiles wherever they play.

Even the most ardently dedicated head, into the doomy delights of socio-political-rock or whatever, has been known to succumb a grudgingly tapping boot to their downhome rock'n'roll. That in the process The Faces themselves have a real good time too, and are seen to be doing so on stage, is part of their success.

"It developed from when we first started in the States," says Rod Stewart, The Faces' much-travelled vocalist. "We were naturally anxious about how we might go down, but we thought, f— it! Let's go out and do our best. It's natural with us. If it wasn't I would be worried. That's the way we work and it's the only way we can play.

"But we rely on the audience a lot. If they are going to give us a hard time it can be difficult, but we always seem to win them round in the end. I've not known a gig here or in America where, so far, we haven't had an encore."

Natural to them it may be, but in some of the more remote and unfriendly territories the group is called upon to play, it isn't always so easy to summon up their renowned geniality. In such circumstances, a heavier than normal burden is placed on The Faces' secret weapon, which Rod Stewart and the *NME* can now reveal is the booze order that goes out with their roadie before every gig.

Wine keeps Kenny Jones and Ronnie Wood's spirits up, bourbon works the same for Ian MacLagan, brandy ensures Ronnie Lane has a real good time and Rod himself puts his faith in two bottles per gig of Stanley Matthews, or Mateus wine as it is known in the trade.

Yet despite all that liquid confidence, Stewart still confesses to fears about how The Faces will be accepted in Britain. When we met, the group had done only nine British gigs in over a year, and had yet to venture into the provinces.

"Well, forgetting the American tours we've done and the fact that the band and I have to make so many albums, I think we were just

bloody scared to go to places like the Marquee and the Lyceum. When we did go, we got 1,100 at the Marquee—the biggest crowd they'd had—and the second time at the Lyceum just knocked everybody out because it went so well.

"The papers have helped us a lot really, particularly on the Continent, where people read the English music papers. In the last week we have had tours come in for Germany and Switzerland, partly because all the papers gave the single such good reviews. Groups still need the press here, whereas in the States the lifeblood of the industry is FM radio.

"It's really nice that everybody's going for us at the moment, but the test will come when we go up north. Tomorrow will be the first time we have ventured up the motorway."

Despite their growing reputation, The Faces are currently better known in the States than they are here, and have just returned from a second American tour which by all accounts was an outstanding success. "My *Gasoline Alley* album had gone to Number 23 in the charts while we were there," said Rod, "and the tour was the best I've known, including those with Jeff Beck."

One not so enjoyable side effect, though, is that flying tends to make the Stewart ankles swell up, so hindering his weekend footballing activities, and he affirms, "Tours do you in a bit. We usually all come back spotty. I think that *Free* album, *Fire And Water*, must have kept us together over there. We had it on cassette and played it all the time; it's such a great album. Next tour, though, we'll split into two three-week parts, with a week home in the middle. It makes it easier. With Beck we used to do 13 weeks on the trot."

In some of the American press reviews that came into the *NME* office, I'd noticed the group billed as Rod Stewart & The Small Faces and put down the latter as an error. With Stewart's solo albums selling well in the States, I could understand the first part of the bill but not the second.

"No, it wasn't a mistake," declared Rod. "Ronnie Wood and I are dead against the Small Faces name used in this country, but we don't object to it in America. The Small Faces are only known there through 'Itchycoo Park', which was a big single, but no one ever shouts out for it. And they don't know too much else about the band.

"On the other hand, people say in this country that we have to live down the old image, as if it was something terrible. But that group made bloody good records. I respect them for that."

One of the later gigs on the tour was topping over Black Sabbath at New York's Fillmore East, where, from a live recording made of The Faces' set, two numbers were used on the group's second album: Paul McCartney's "Maybe I'm Amazed" and their adaptation of the old Broonzy number they feature as an encore, "Feel So Good".

The rest of the album will comprise nine new group numbers and, according to Stewart, will be more like *Gasoline Alley* than The Faces' *First Step*. It should be released around February, to tie in with a short British concert tour.

First Step was a long while being recorded and, on the new album, Rod had hoped for a *Gasoline Alley*, a two week in-and-out job. The four months they've taken so far, though, has forced Rod to resign himself to the fact that The Faces need a long time for recording.

His attention will shortly be needed, too, on another solo album for Vertigo. He has a few songs in mind: The Who's "The Seeker," Chris Farlowe's "Out Of Time" and "Bob Dylan's Dream" from the *Freewheelin'*... LP—although "that may be too personal to him".

As an album high point he'd had the traditional "Amazing Grace" in mind for some time, having been treasuring to himself an old recording by Doc Watson he's discovered in Colletts a year ago. "Now bloody Judy Collins has gone and done it," swore our hero ungallantly. *Nick Logan* •

"The test will come when we go up north. Tomorrow's the first time"

"Everybody's going for us at the moment": The Faces (l-r) Kenney Jones, Rod Stewart, Ian MacLagan, Ronnie Lane and Ronnie Wood



1970

JULY – SEPTEMBER



Mick Jagger live in 1970: "I'd like to get further out in music, but you have to do what you do best"

“You have to go to the people”

As the **ROLLING STONES** prepare to tour Europe, **MICK JAGGER** talks **The Beatles**, his new label and the band's exciting new show. “Musicians should live out of suitcases — not country houses,” he says, while packing his feathers for the trip.

— **NME** AUGUST 29 —

AFTER SLUMBERING FOR upwards of half a year, the Stones came a honky-tonking back to life again at the weekend, following what is by now a familiar pattern. It goes like this: months of silence pass by, spasmodic and none-too-hopeful requests for a Rolling Stone to interview fall on stony ground, while the group's Maddox Street offices might for all you know have gone to the moon.

Then one day out of the blue comes a communiqué that they will be available for interviews the following day at 12.15 prompt and you scoot round to Maddox Street, bump into a melee of journalists as you open the door, and discover inside an industrious collage of wandering Stones, staff temporarily evicted from offices and, on this particular occasion, an equipment team getting themselves together under pop art posters for the forthcoming European tour.

The European tour, of course. If I'd remembered that, I could have predicted the sudden burst of activity. “Everyone's being nice to each other today,” announced Jo Bergman, of Stones admin, while I waited for Mick Jagger, my turn coming round as the local church bell struck 1pm and rang on, jammed in its insane clanging and sounding ominously like a death knell. »

GETTY

Mr Jagger declined to bite, looked fit if a little grey-faced in velvet jacket and cap, and said how enthusiastic he was about getting back on the road. He'd been getting things together, he volunteered, muttering darkly about packing his feathers. Feathers? "Yeah, feathers," confirmed Mick, meaning the house decoration kind which apparently he takes with him, along with other favourite items from his Chelsea home, to lessen the impersonal feel of hotel rooms. "If you can throw around a few colourful rugs and things it makes all the difference," quoth Mick, displaying a new facet of his personality.

Since their American tour ended in December last year, the Stones, according to Mick, have been writing and messing around. "We have read a lot and been very lazy. I think that is maybe why we keep together, because we don't work all the time but when we do we work very hard for concentrated periods of time."

I'd wondered if, after six years of it, the renowned Jagger enthusiasm might be slowing down, but Mick confirmed what he'd said earlier with, "It wanes in and out, like the moon. But I am usually interested in what is going on. Everybody is, but there do of course come periods when you don't dig it. I mean I really dig it most of the time, but when I don't I go off and do something else and when I come back I am more enthusiastic than ever."

"I have dug it more in the last two years and since we went to America it has been really strong. I think I have driven everyone crazy by my over-enthusiasm and I cannot wait to get back on the road, not necessarily for doing my little bit on stage, but because I just like being on the road. I think musicians should live out of suitcases and not out of country houses."

As Mick intimates, not all the Stones share his amount of enthusiasm, and on the question of conflicting attitudes he says, "You should ask Charlie what he feels, because he thinks totally different. I think Mick feels the same as I do. But because I think that, it doesn't mean that we don't get on. I love Charlie and understand him and he understands me. We can have our own lives within the framework of what we do, which is very fortunate."

And referring to The Beatles, who we had touched on earlier: "I guess that is something that John and Paul found they could not do."

If they'd followed his maxim of "suitcases and not country houses", did he think The Beatles might still be together today?

"I think if they had stayed on the road a little bit more and got into playing... I mean they can sing. I respect their point of view. Why don't they play on stage... but they should be able to get out of that actual thing of being idolised. Paul could do it. He could say 'this is my solo thing' in concert. 'I am going to sing all my own songs with a guitar.' He could do it and it wouldn't be screaming kids throwing jelly babies. They would just sit up and listen. The other doesn't happen any more, but I think they believe it does. You have to go to the people."

Is his interest in the wider music scene still as strong as it was? "Yeah," said Mick, "for the whole music scene, although it's stronger when I'm abroad. I don't hang out here much at all. Here

I've seen Eric's new band [Derek & The Dominos], but I don't go out every night. Maybe I should. In America I do. Maybe it's because I'm at home or go round to someone else's house to sing or something."

Mick Jagger the home-loving boy yet. What is the "something else" he does when he fails to dig it?

"When I'm not playing I listen to records; when I don't listen I read; when I don't read I sleep; and when I don't sleep I f—."

"To anyone in particular recently?" (meaning record listening).

"You mean anyone I've f—ed," enquired Mick, laughing.

"I listened to the new Steve Stills solo album, which I like very much.

And Miles Davis. I like Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young very much, particularly the Neil Young song ('Helpless') on the second album. Steve Stills' solo is very funky, but generally they don't play enough funk for me. I like funky things. I still like black music a lot, but I don't like it exclusively. I like country music, and Cajun."

Earlier we talked about the record company the Stones plan to start now their recording contract with Decca has ended and Mick had volunteered, "It's a time for change. A time to change everything... your life, your sex, your attitudes, your music. You have to change, change your way of life. Otherwise you get into a rut. We change the music all the time."

"We decided in a very loose way that we were going to have a second company. We wanted to employ a few people to look after the Stones records – some work that we were doing and some that Allen Klein was doing. It is partly for the people we employ here – they don't have that much to do when we're not working."

"So when it is running efficiently and when we are sure the services are good, then other people can use the services we have to offer. We are not going to run around looking for groups to sign up until we are sure they will get good treatment."

Of the group's break with Klein, Jagger would say little except that the reasons would not be printable – "You can just say it was time for a change" – and of Marshall Chess, American former head of the Chess R&B label and now employed to run the Stones' record company, he states, "He knows a lot about the record industry and he also likes good music."

Did Mick think the Stones had any lessons to learn from The Beatles' handling of Apple and also from the reasons behind the Beatles break-up?

"Well, I have tried to see from the beginning that we have someone who is experienced and professional and who knows the industry. That is the main lesson. There won't be any Stones involved in that field. We'll also keep the staff small and efficient and dedicated and not dressed up in weird clothes and all that, though I'm not saying that you can't be efficient in weird clothes."

"Obviously all that costs a lot of money, but if we can get really good artists to join us we are not bothered whether they are new or established. But if it is not working we are not going to sign any artists at all to the label."

And what of the apparent Beatles split? "They don't exist; that's it. Bands do break up... I just wish they would all get new bands together. I wish Paul McCartney would get a band or something together. It is disappointing that they don't write together, but nothing can go on forever."

Couldn't the same be said of the Stones? "Yeah, of course. I think Keith could write on his own. He is really strong as a songwriter. He writes funky songs and pretty songs. But I don't take that much interest in what they [The Beatles] do. We just get on on our own. I follow what they do, like people who read the *NME* do, but that's all. As for lessons. Well, there are lessons to be learnt from Blind Faith and Cream, I suppose, but I haven't studied them. As for us, as long as the band swings, we will stay together."

"It's time for a change... your life, your sex, your attitudes, your music"



As we'd touched upon solo albums – Steve Stills' and George Harrison's – I asked if Jagger had ever felt a need to do something away

from the Stones. "I don't want to do a solo album," replied Mick, leaving his seat and pacing the room. "The group gives us the freedom to do more or less what we want both collectively and individually.

"If we want to make a track that's produced, then we can. If we want to do a blues, we can. There's no one particular thing we can't get into, although we couldn't get into certain pop things or the poppy songs we used to do.

"There are a lot of songs we used to do that we couldn't get into now. We tried to play 'Paint It Black' the other day while working out an act, but we couldn't get behind it. We can still do the old rock'n'roll things we did and can get behind most kinds of music, but we couldn't do 'Gimme Dat Ding' or something like that."

Taking his seat again, Mick mentioned that the previous interviewer had asked him if the Stones shouldn't have been more progressive, like Led Zeppelin.

"Led Zeppelin – progressive?" boomed Jagger, and we got into discussing groups that are tagged progressive yet get their best audience reactions from the selection of old rock standards they close with.

"To me, that's alright," said Mick. "The biggest reactions we get are usually for the rock things, like 'Satisfaction' and 'Little Queenies'. If a group can play simple rock things well it shows they are a good progressive band. To be able to play that and make it swing shows that a group knows where its base is, because that is the basic cake on top of which the progression is built. Play that well and you can be confident of tackling anything else.

"We are progressive in our own way. If you run back through the albums, I don't think you'll find that we have repeated ourselves. And that is progression. We have cut tracks lately which have been experimental, and that's progression for us. It is also progression for the Stones to play a good country song, or give a country song a new twist, or a rock song a new life.

"I would like to get further out in music, but you have to do what you do best. It would be no good us trying to do a Soft Machine. I don't like it, but I can dig that that is what they do best."

After the six-week European trip, Mick hopes the group will be able to do some British gigs, possibly in clubs because, "We can experiment more in clubs. We want to be a bit more experimental, and in clubs it is easier to know how the group is sounding."

The appearance of Miss Bergman brought our chat to an end. "That must be about 10 interviews I've done today," sighed Mick, smiling sweetly. SMILING SWEETLY! HOME LOVING! Pigs might yet fly. *Nick Logan*



Mick Taylor and Keith Richards backstage during the Stones' tour of Europe, autumn 1970

“There are a lot of songs we used to do that we couldn't get into now”

visionary pronouncements. It reminded one of ex-Premier Harold Wilson's 100 days of gritty and abrasive dynamism and the white heat of the technological revolution.

"What story do you want to hear?" asked Mick Jagger, toying with a beaker of tea. "They're all different. Oh, it's such a bore."

"Have you seen Gene Krupa?" asked Charlie Watts, relaxing in a wicker chair.

"What are the dressing rooms like these days?" asked Bill Wyman anxiously. "Are they as bad as ever? I don't know... we haven't toured England for three years. When did we last tour England?" Bill turned to Charlie.

"You know, I saw Krupa at that place – the Metropole in New York. Nobody plays like that any more. I was listening to some of the old Benny Goodman Quartet records – and he used to play so fast." Charlie munched a sandwich with an expansive gesture.

All the Stones, with the exception of Keith Richards, had gathered at their palatial London office to launch Phase Five of the Rolling Stones saga. There was plenty of tea and chat, although one sensed from the ever-amiable Mick that everyone should both own up and get it over. »

CHRIS WALTER

— MELODY MAKER AUGUST 29 —

STAND BY FOR action! The Rolling Stones are roaring back into business! A giant Euro-rock tour, their own label, a new LP, hints of British dates – a wave of dynamic energy is to be unleashed! And this week the Stones poured out their plans in a torrent of fiery words and

Journalists queued for their “exclusive” interviews, looking as worried as patients awaiting tooth extraction. Americans probed and Englishmen dithered. When the Stones meet the press it can be fun. The most important point about the good old Stones is that they are still good as well as being old – the world’s oldest surviving rock band.

They have been through so many scenes and misunderstood on such a universal scale, it is a tribute to Jagger, Wyman, Watts, Richards and new boy Mick Taylor that they have retained their sanity and stuck together. It comes as quite a surprise to find there are still people living on the planet, eating, drinking, washing and carrying out normal, day-to-day duties, who believe the Stones are rogues capable of nameless sin.

A cab driver, on hearing mention of the name Stones, Rolling, immediately launched into a diatribe concluding with the belief that they were “horrible”.

Now it can be revealed – the Stones are harmless chaps, kind to dumb animals, keen on music, photography and the arts. They teeter between mild bouts of obscurity and flares of creativity. We are now upon such a latter course. And their European tour, which starts next week, promises to be a time of much rejoicing and merriment, enhanced by the addition of a wonderful new invention – the Giant Gantry.

Martin Francis, an assistant to Mr Chip Moncke, “the voice of Woodstock”, explained their plans. “We are taking on the tour a rig structure which will form a backstage proscenium arch to support drapes and spotlights. The supporting towers will be 43 feet high and around the stage will be sound towers for the amplification.

“It is a totally new concept which is being specially built in England. Constructed entirely of aluminium, the individual tubes, ladders and frames clip together and it can be stripped down in two hours. It is estimated that it will take five hours to set up. Two trucks and a forklift truck will be used in transportation.”

Martin began to sound rather like Isambard Kingdom Brunel announcing his plans for the construction of the Great Western Railway. “There will be six super trooper spotlights and six focal cannon spotlights and brand-new Gladiator spotlights. It will be moved 300 to 400 miles a day and will place an onus of responsibility on the individual venues...” One might say that again... “Will place an onus of responsibility on the individual venues.”

Meanwhile, Charlie was still chatting. “Of course James Fox was fantastic in *Performance*, although I was very disappointed with the performance of my mate. Hello, he’s got his notebook out.”

What have the lads been up to, one wondered? “We’ve been in the studios for three months for the new LP and rehearsing in Wimbledon,” said Mick Taylor, keen to get down to business.

“I saw Air Force at the Albert Hall,” interrupted Charlie. “They were BEAUTIFUL – and I thought they must completely revolutionise pop. They were really excellent and of course they have a lot of people I like in the band. I just liked the whole scene. Ginger can play – he was really lovely and Remi Kabaka was great.”

Undeterred, Mick Taylor assembled his thoughts about the Rolling Stones. “We haven’t done too much of the new album yet – we’ll get most of it done after the tour. After the last American tour the band was a lot tighter. No – I haven’t been doing any writing...”

“That last American tour was lovely,” said Charlie. “We hadn’t been there for quite a while and I was scared of going. You talk about it to people who have been a lot, but when we got there, we found a lot of genuine excitement. It wasn’t hysterical – like the first time.

“Altamont was a different thing altogether. That was nothing to do with the tour anyway. It came after. It was a gesture that got f— up. We’ve been through that a lot of times since and there is nothing more that can be said. Somebody had to be made the scapegoats and we were the nearest. The Lyceum in London was a buzz, but the Saville Theatre was a drag.”

“That was a flop for everybody,” agreed Mick. “But we may do some more dates in London, after this tour.”

“You know what we are like,” said Charlie. “Stop and start. We are always actually doing something although we haven’t performed for six months.”

“There’s no title yet for the next LP,” said Mick helpfully. “But we’ve only just got the ‘live’ album out.”

“I like to play our albums once to make sure we’ve done them right, then forget about them. I never play our records. We’ve always had to buy our own records anyway,” Charlie complained.

Was he slightly amazed that the Stones were still going? “Not amazed that the band is still going, just amazed they get anything together. That’s our claim to fame. We’re a terrible band, but the oldest. I feel like George Lewis. Yes, I know he’s dead. Thanks. You know – I never got into George Lewis much. Ed Hall, now he was my favourite on the liquorice. Do you know, I haven’t bought a record since 1958? I think I should get a new one.”

What kind of musical programme will the Stones offer us in the future? “A few of the old favourites and a lot of new songs,” said Micky T.

“Although we won’t put in too many new songs, as they don’t always go down too well. We might take Bobby Keys the sax player with us. I didn’t know what to expect when I joined the Stones, but I suppose I thought we would be playing a lot more than we have. I don’t feel ‘left on the shelf’, though. We all contribute to the group sound – Mick and Keith write the songs, which are usually very sketchy, and we build them up. Sometimes they turn out to be completely different from the original idea. Keith writes some beautiful songs.”

Why haven’t the Stones done any singles lately? “We’ve been recording,” said Charlie, “but we haven’t done a single. We got the horrors after ‘Honky Tonk Women’ about picking a

follow-up. ‘Honky Tonk’ wasn’t done as a single anyway. It was an LP track that got overdubbed. It started out with a country sound. There are no definite plans for a new single, although one or two are being considered.”

Mr Jagger, wearing a jaunty hat, took a seat, inspected the sandwiches with some disdain, and looked suitably bored. What are the Stones’ plans for the future? What did Mick think of his role as Ned Kelly? What was the truth about his relationship with Princess Margaret? Will the group split up? Penetrating questions formed on the tip of my tongue.

“These sandwiches have got tomato in them,” he announced. “Is there any tea?”

Finally we came to the hub of the matter. The Rolling Stones’ own record label. What news?

“We want to control prices and seek new ways of distribution”



"Which story do you want?" Mick was determined to put across the full facts, with the minimum of bad language. "We want to be as independent as possible. So we decided to get some people to do the services for us, services which will successfully combine effort with hard work and sincerity. We want to keep our overheads low. We want to release the odd blues record and Charlie wants to do some jazz. We want to control prices and stop the prices of records going up, and I'd like to seek new ways of distribution that haven't been tried before."

"A lot of people think we have signed with Chess Records, especially after your report." He gave a penetrating look. "It's all a bit of a bore. The label won't have any particular policy. But we're not too intent on bubblegum material. I'm not going to run it anyway. Ask Marshall Chess. I'm just an artist on the label; I don't want to do any production. And we haven't got a name yet."

Mick was looking forward to the tour, he revealed, and smiled to indicate a thawing process. "We want to put on a good show visually. Most stages look like a bicycle shop with guitar leads everywhere – really messy. The trouble with England is that there aren't enough places where we can stage anything like this. Yes, I'm really looking forward to Europe. I'm getting my suitcases packed. Is that it?" And he whisked away, possibly in search of tomato-less sandwiches.

"I don't know where we are playing," I heard Charlie remark as the Phase Five Launch Probe de-accelerated. "Where are we playing?"

How about the Railway Hotel, Richmond, lads? *Chris Welch*

— NME NOVEMBER 7 —

"WELL I MEAN, I don't wanna be a solo star or anything at all like that," Mick Jagger began in his slow and yet precise lethargic drawl. "If it had been left up to me, I just wouldn't have put out 'Memo From Turner' as a single," he continued, referring to this week's rather mysterious rush-release of his first solo disc. "OK, so it's quite a nice little record," he deliberated,



October 1970: Keith Richards with his son Marlon and Charlie Watts at Schiphol Airport, Netherlands

"but it's just not commercial enough. It was done strictly as part of the soundtrack for *Performance* – and that's all."

So please don't expect to see Mick's sartorially attired presence on your television screens, cavorting about in his most outrageous and flamboyant manner. For, as far as Mick is concerned, Decca needn't have bothered to release it. He confirmed that he has absolutely no intentions whatsoever of promoting it. Disenchanted, but not to the point of anger, with the logic of its release, he revealed rather nonchalantly, "You know, at first they were only going to put it out as a Rolling Stones single. That was until I pointed out that none of the others were on it. If they were gonna bring it out at all, they should have at least done it to coincide with the release of the film."

Then, with tongue in cheek, he elaborated: "But you know me... I wouldn't dream of telling all those big businessmen what they should do. 'Cos as we all know, they are so professional and know exactly what they are doing all the time."

When I dutifully enquired as to exactly when *Performance* would go on release, his reply was: "No one can seem to get an answer to that one."

It's not every day that Michael Phillip Jagger rings you up for a quick chat. However, it wasn't to be a peaceful tête-à-tête, for on two occasions we were joined by a mysterious third party. Thankfully, this unknown

American female quickly obeyed Mick's request – and got off the line. Recapping as to why Mick had in fact decided to cut "Memo From Turner" without the rest of the Stones, he told me, "They just weren't around at the time. So I did it with Steve Winwood and Jim Capaldi. But when the tape was flown over to the States, the original backing track was erased and a new one, using American session men, was substituted instead. In fact, I wasn't there when they did it."

The rush-release of Jagger's solo effort could probably be Decca's last big fling before the Stones emerge with their very own label. At this time Mick was understandably evasive about revealing both the title of the Stones' debut single or for that matter the name of the label. But he did disclose that we could expect a new single from the Stones before Christmas.

"We would have liked to have had the album out at the same time, but honestly I don't think that it will be ready in time. So we'll keep that for the New Year."

Trying to extract some more information, I enquired if the new Stones' single would be a song called "Wild Horses", which they recorded with a couple of members of the Flying Burrito Brothers in Muscle Shoals, and which at one time was on the shortlist as a possible single.

"No... we decided to re-cut it again over here. And it is included on the new album."

At that precise moment we were again interrupted by our mysterious American intruder. And with a final "Thanks for listening, I'll see ya around," Jagger was gone. *Roy Carr* •



Keith, Mick and Charlie in the studio listening to *Sticky Fingers*, the first LP to be released on the Stones' own label

1970

JULY – SEPTEMBER

“A band of renown”

ERIC CLAPTON wants to be loved for his playing, not the celebrity that killed Blind Faith. His answer is the anonymous **DEREK AND THE DOMINOS**, a band with former Delaney & Bonnie musicians. Can he persuade another hot guitarist to join? Says **DUANE ALLMAN**: “I’ve got my own fish to fry.”

— NME AUGUST 22 —

A SUMMER SINCE THE last one, a new Eric Clapton band was again causing hold-ups in the London traffic on its touring debut in the capital last week. But any similarity between that and the last time our hero stepped out with a new group ends there.

Last time, you will recall, absolutely no one was permitted to remain oblivious to the prolonged machinations of Eric’s plans, first with Stevie and Ginger and then with Rick Grech, until the publicity machine reached a fuse-blowing climax at the stage when even Grandad on the beach at Blackpool could read in his *News Of The World* of the new wonder discovery Blind Faith and its debut at the Great Hyde Park Sit-In.

Last week’s was a different story. There’s a good chance that you, never mind Grandad, don’t know who Derek And The Dominos are, or that this gloriously named new band of Clapton’s has been on the road a full three weeks. And if that’s the case, then it’s probably because Mr Clapton wants it that way.

“Yeah, it is the absolute opposite of Blind Faith,” agreed Eric, talking at his manager’s Mayfair offices. “That was very frightening, the Blind Faith thing, the show in the park and then straight off to huge places like the Forum in LA. I got very disenchanted with the big venues, but it was all very trial-and-error, as it was with this band. What we planned for Blind Faith we did, in good faith; it was only when we started doing it that we realised we were wrong.”

His send-off for the Dominos – former Delaney & Bonnie back-up men Bobby Whitlock, organ/vocals, Jim Gordon, drums, and Carl Radle, bass – couldn’t have been more different.

The first gig of the current tour was at the Dagenham Roundhouse, and subsequent ones have been of a similar nature: the circuit for a group building a reputation from scratch rather than one for a musician of Clapton’s stature. »

GETTY



Derek And The Dominos
in 1970: (l-r) Jim Gordon,
Carl Radle, Bobby
Whitlock and Eric Clapton

"We hope to work up to bigger things later," explained Eric in a masterly understatement. "This way provides good experience without too much exposure and is the best way to get a group band together. We can all stretch out more and get a better idea of what we sound like in a club. In a concert, the sound is difficult to judge. And also it's a lot more satisfying musically. The audiences are a lot more responsive than I remembered from the past."

In a crowded room containing, among others, Dominos Gordon and Whitlock, Eric was his usual amiable self, rattling off honest, brisk and to-the-point answers between jokes with the assembled company. It was hard to reconcile this with the popular representation of Clapton as the "lost soul" forever in search for his musical niche.

"Haven't I always seemed like that?" he replied when I put it to him. "Lots of people and the press have tried to pin that on me as an image, but it is no more true of me than of anyone else. I mean, I could turn that back on you and ask if all musicians aren't like that in one way or another."

He is, all the same, still trying to dodge the personality cult. "I thought I had with Blind Faith. That was the object. I thought the best way to do it was not to contribute too much and let the others set the pace and direction. Maybe that didn't work. I didn't get very far either with Delaney & Bonnie, because some

people in the audiences seemed to think that it was my band and were shouting out song titles and getting nasty because I wasn't playing more. The way I see it now is to change the name to something like Derek And The Dominos and get into it more."

To minimise the ever-present danger that the band will find acceptance purely because it is his band, a clause has been inserted in the group's contracts which stipulates billing as "Derek And The Dominos" and no overuse of Clapton's name as a crowd-puller. The band got started two months ago. "I had just come back from America after the Delaney & Bonnie tour," said Eric, "and sat down in a state of confusion for some time with no particular plans or whatever. Bobby [Whitlock] had left Delaney & Bonnie and came to England as an instinctive move, and it all started rolling from there. It amazes me how much work we have got through, considering that we were rehearsing for only a month of that time."

They played their first gig at the London Lyceum, then went off into hibernation. It was Tony Ashton, of Ashton, Gardner & Dyke, who came up with the joke name as Clapton's band were sitting backstage at the Lyceum wondering what to call themselves. Dave Mason was in the lineup then, but has since left. His album was doing well in the States, explained Eric, and he wanted to go over and follow it up with a tour.

Since the Lyceum the band has made enormous strides, and those who felt that Clapton's solo album – released this week – bears a destructively heavy influence of Delaney & Bonnie will be saddened to hear that with the Dominos on the road Eric is, without doubt, the physical and musical leader.

The night after the Marquee they played the smaller Speakeasy and woke up the blasé, star-packed audience with a dynamic set. It was nice to hear Eric spreading out more on guitar than he has of late, and if his voice had to strain on occasions, there was adequate compensation in the fact that it came over far more natural and unforced than it did on the record. For material, the band picked the best of Clapton's album – "Bad Boy", "Blues Power", "Bottle Of Red Wine" – but delivered with far more satisfaction, plus newer compositions by Clapton and Whitlock, including a tribute to Jimi Hendrix. The album had been a rushed job, although Eric says he is satisfied with all the performances except his. He would have liked to have done all the vocals over again.

"Some of the songs were made up in the studio," he revealed. "We did all the tracks in a week and put the voices on a month later, again in a week. You can do an album in a day and it needn't be rushed, but when you go in with nothing prepared then you are rushed."

The group, states Eric emphatically, is taking all his present time. He sees it very much as a long-term prospect and adds, "Nothing else crosses my mind. What we want is to make it into a band... a band of renown."

And he smiles. *Nick Logan*

Tight, compact

MM AUG 22 *EC shrugs off his blues at a club date in Soho.*

"ERIC IS DEREK" proclaimed a badge on one of Derek And The Dominos roadies' lapels. And with his new group Eric Clapton seems to have found the happiness that has escaped him for a long time, and become the leader of a very tight band.

Eric led his band on to the stage to two packed houses at London's Marquee on Tuesday night last week, and received acclaim from the audience at both, and the calls for old Cream numbers that have bugged him at some of the group's earlier dates did not materialise. Basically the group play a form of white soul, and it is obvious that Eric learnt a lot during his short liaison with Delaney & Bonnie. Carl Radle and Jim Gordon lay down a firm beat on bass and drums behind the lead work of Bobby Whitlock and Eric.

Eric used to look unhappy on stage, but not with this group. Not only does he smile, but his guitar playing smiles, too. A lot of criticism has been laid at Eric because he has left the blues behind. But if Tuesday at the Marquee was anything to go by, it's just as well he has. His playing now is far tighter

and more compact, and his voice was good.

The choice of material was a trifle narrow. Songs Eric wrote with Delaney Bramlett tended to be rockers, and the others written and sung by Bobby Whitlock lean more towards ballads, and have a little more power. It was nice to see a big name group playing in a club, where the big names start, but then desert when fame strikes.

Funnily enough, on the way to the Marquee, I noticed an old faded "Clapton is God" scrawl on a bus-stop, and talking to him in the tiny dressing room during the break between sets reminded me of the old Yardbirds days. The excitement in his playing then, which was lacking for so long, is back again. *Mark Plummer*



"Not only does he smile, his guitar playing smiles"

caught in the act **EXTRA**

Eric's happy as Derek

— MELODY MAKER AUGUST 8 —

BOBBY WHITLOCK FIRST came to this country with Delaney & Bonnie when they toured with Eric Clapton, playing organ with the Friends. Now he is living here, and playing with Eric's new band, Derek And The Dominos. Last week the *MM* spoke to Bobby at London's Revolution club, where the band was rehearsing to go on the road. Whitlock comes from just outside Memphis and started his own group, which played clubs in the area, about five years ago. But it wasn't until Delaney & Bonnie went to Memphis, and became the first white band to record there, that his talent was spotted.

"I met Delaney & Bonnie in Memphis about three years ago, and they asked me to join them and form the Friends. It wasn't until I met Delaney that I really started getting into music. He helped me to learn to play well, and bring out my talents for writing and singing," said Bobby. But Delaney and Bonnie's Friends split up soon after they became well known. So I suggested maybe they were hard to get on with, but Bobby disagreed.

"Well, being man and wife, sometimes it was difficult; you kind of become very involved. Anytime I was with them and something happened, I became part of it. But they are not hard to get on with; in fact, it's just the opposite. I was really close to them, and I still am. I really love them both.

"But everyone left us, and went off with Joe Cocker, and the three of us started to get something together. Then finally I felt I needed a split. I felt I was being suppressed, not being able to sing and things, but the split was accepted by them."

After leaving Delaney & Bonnie, Bobby came to this country to get away from America. "I came over here for a holiday or something, and

went to see Eric, who suggested forming a band. So we made a few telephone calls and got it together. And now I like it so much over here. It's so relaxed and tension-free that I am going to get a place in the country and set up home here. In the States there are so many different scenes, and I never wanted to get involved. But over here you can do as you wish."

Does he miss anything about the States? "No, nothing at all, all my friends are over here—well, almost all of them. Although it will be nice to tour there later this year. The thing with the States was that I was living in LA, which is like a beehive after living like I had."

Bobby is enjoying playing with Derek And The Dominos and cannot wait to get back on the road, especially playing the smaller clubs.

"It will be really great getting to the people again. When you are playing concerts in big halls all the time, you lose contact with people. But we want to get back to the people again; you really see the audience and get sweaty and hot with them. A group really gets together that way, that's where you get tight. After playing the smaller clubs you get to feel each other so much better."

What sort of material will the band be doing live? "We're going to do some things off the album we did with Delaney, plus some new things Eric and I have written. We're trying to get our own sound—something unique to Derek And The Dominos, and it's heading in a really good direction."

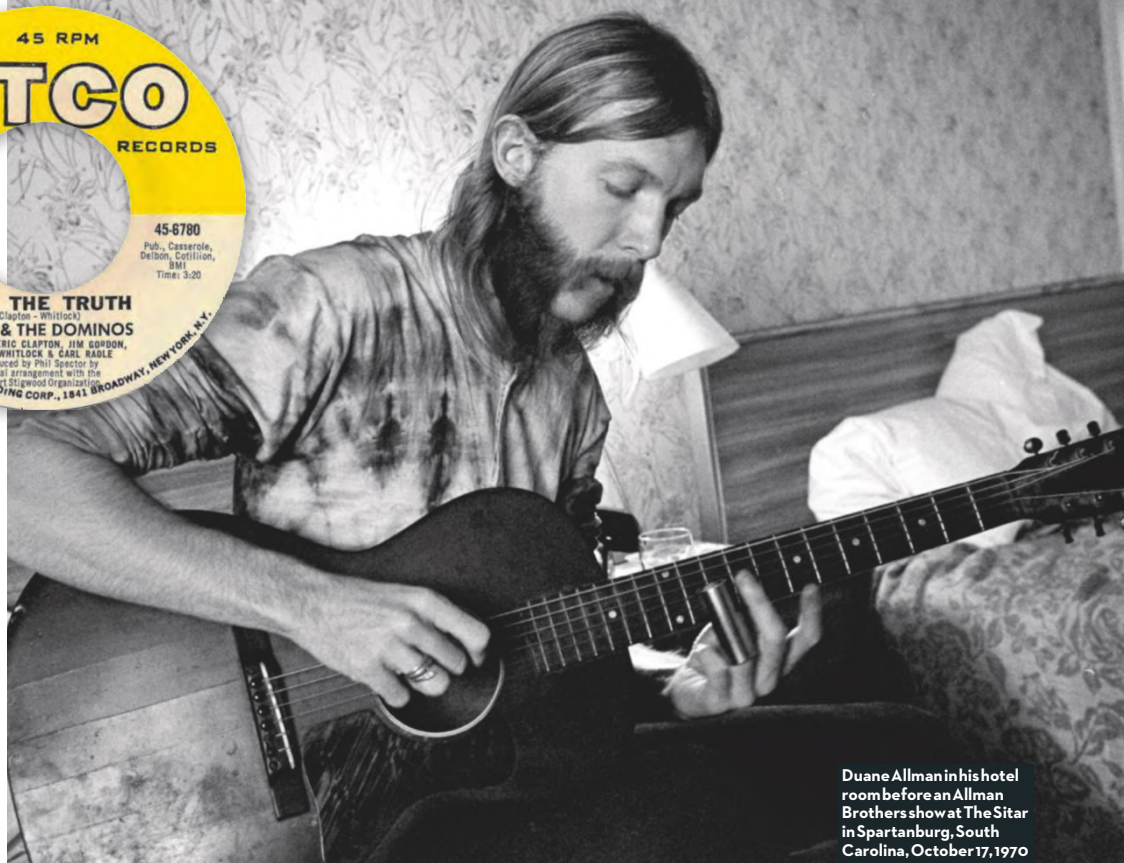
Like many of today's musicians Bobby cannot read or write music and plays completely by ear. "I am trying to get into the piano. We will be using the piano a lot more now, and I expect we will use one on the tour."

Bobby hopes to record a solo album sometime in the future, and has already begun one. "Before the split from Delaney & Bonnie, I started one which Delaney was producing, but I shall scrap that now. At the moment I don't have the time to do too much on my own; in fact, we have been rehearsing very hard for the last month-and-a-half, and even harder for the last five days.

"I feel very tired now; these last few days at the Revolution have been hard going. But it will be worth every minute of it when we are back on the road seeing and meeting people again. That's when we prove the band."

— MELODY MAKER NOVEMBER 7 —

DUANE ALLMAN, AMERICAN super-session guitarist, will not be joining Derek And The Dominos—but there's a chance he and Eric Clapton may team up as an acoustic duo sometime in the future. Duane, speaking from Nashville at the weekend, told me he had been working with Eric on an album and had been invited to join the Dominos. "I have got my own fish to fry at the moment, but maybe sometime we might get together," he drawled across the transatlantic line. "It could be just Eric and me paying acoustic guitars. We were playing together and singing a lot acoustically and we get on very well together, like



Duane Allman in his hotel room before an Allman Brothers show at The Sitar in Spartanburg, South Carolina, October 17, 1970

"We get on well, like a sort of Laurel and Hardy singing the blues"

a sort of Laurel and Hardy singing the blues. But right now we have each got our own things going and wanted to keep it that way.

"I am going to join up with Eric's band for a few dates towards the end of his tour, but I am so busy with my own band that it's very difficult. I can't even get over to see Eric because my own band is working its ass off at the moment."

Duane's own band—the Allman Brothers—is a six-piece unit featuring two lead guitars, two drummers, bass and organ. Greg Allman sings and plays organ.

"We haven't got any big stars in the Allman Brothers, but they are all just great players. It's difficult to describe the sounds we are getting

together, like free-form things with a rock format. It's blues, jazz and rock all mixed up."

Duane started out playing guitar with a band on the West Coast before he got into the Muscle Shoals session scene. "I got really fed up with playing with the band in California, so I went home and bummed around drinking for a while. Finally I got the chance to go to Muscle Shoals to do a Wilson Pickett session. He had four guitar players there and I was the fourth. It was like sitting at the back of a football game watching everything else.

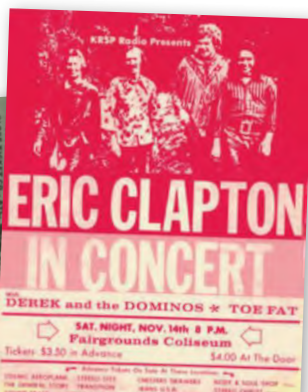
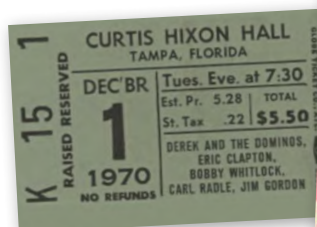
"I was sitting around and thinking about 'Hey Jude', so I suggested it. Wilson let me play lead on that one because I thought of the idea. Anyway, I stayed in Muscle Shoals for about eight months and really had a good time. I worked with Pickett, Aretha Franklin, Arthur Conley, James Carr, King Curtis, Laura Nyro and Ronnie Hawkins.

"I had a good place to live, but there is no liquor or women there and nothing to do apart from play. The nature trip wore me out, so I went down to Florida and got the band together. After a while it started getting really good and we recorded an album. Now we are getting more and more gigs and our second album is in about No 60 in the charts."

Duane is full of admiration for Eric as a guitarist. "He came to one of our gigs and that is how I got to know him," he said.

"He is the only guitarist in London that seems to know what he is doing, and he freaked out when he heard our band. He invited us to go to the studio to play around and that's where it started."

Duane wants to bring his band to Britain at the earliest opportunity. "I have never been to England and I have heard so much about it," he said. "We want to come as soon as we can get a tour lined up. I'm really anxious to come, but we are so busy at the moment that it's impossible." Chris Charlesworth •





1970

OCTOBER — DECEMBER

JETHRO TULL, JANIS JOPLIN, THE WHO, LED ZEPPELIN AND MORE

Phenomenal

NME **SEPT 26** RIP, Jimi.

JIMI HENDRIX WAS known as the wild man of pop and he certainly earned that reputation on stage. But in private life, among his close friends, he had a polite, almost shy, manner. The opposite of the impression he gave on stage. The immense loss that his sad, untimely death will mean to music is beyond doubt and his legion of devoted fans throughout the world have been joined in sadness and mourning by legions of musicians who respected Jimi's work. »

MICROPIX



Jimi Hendrix at his flat in London's Mayfair, January 7, 1969: his music was "raw and alive...sympathetic and releasing"

He was a brilliant, perhaps phenomenal, guitarist and his writing was extremely original. His songs are immediately identifiable with the writer; nobody else could quite capture the essence of excitement and perception that Jimi had. Jim's rise to fame was meteoric. Former Animal Chas Chandler found him playing in a New York nightclub and brought him to London. It took only a few short weeks for Jimi to become the idol of millions.

His stage act was talked about as being obscene, but this as all part of his music—raw and alive, filled with the problems that confront everyone and, at the same time, sympathetic and releasing.

When Jimi signed with Track records, I worked for him during a period of about three months. It was difficult to get to know him personally as he rarely spoke of anything but his music. He was devoted to it and spent long hours without sleep composing. That, plus the stresses and strains of the hard-working life that had been forced upon him, eventually led to nervous tension. Even when he wanted to be alone, he was rarely allowed to relax.

A series of hit records and massive sell-out concert tours made Jimi the subject of adulation almost everywhere. The Jimi Hendrix Experience became one of the world's highest-paid groups. Jimi, Noel Redding and Mitch Mitchell lived in style. Noel suffered a series of breakdowns before he eventually quit the group to form Fat Mattress, and Mitch was often taken ill too, owing to the demanding schedules of playing and travelling. But it was Jimi who felt the effects most. He sought a release of a kind through drugs, but it is useless to pretend that this is anything new for musicians. Jimi just seemed to be the one who got the most publicity.

Just as plans were being made to re-form the original trio, Jimi died at the ridiculously early age of 24 (sic: in fact 27). His body is being flown back to Seattle for burial within the next few days. All those who knew Jimi are still sad and numb. They have lost a friend.

It is hard, too, for the fans who will never be able to see him again. Only his memory and his music live on as an everlasting monument to a truly great man of music and person.

Richard Green



August 6, 1970: Janis Joplin at the Festival For Peace, an anti-war fundraiser held at New York's Shea Stadium

A life lived to the full

NME OCT 10 RIP, Janis Joplin, a character with "an aura as solid as gold".

THOUGH SHE PROBABLY felt a need to live up to the Barnum & Bailey image that grew to envelope her, Janis Joplin did undoubtedly carry with her an aura that was as solid as gold.

Her thing was for living every minute of her life and for draining every precious ounce of enjoyment out of it – and when you met her, if only temporarily, it became your thing too.

News of her death from a drug overdose in Hollywood this week brought one of her most quoted statements immediately to mind:

"Man," she was reported as saying, "I'd rather have 10

years of super-hyper-most living than live to be 70 sitting in some goddam chair watching TV."

Janis was a legendary character, and as with any of that kind, it was always difficult to separate the fact from the fiction. Stories abound about her infamous exploits, her capacity for drink and her early years. In London last year, she told me that she first became aware of the power of her voice at the age of 17, demonstrating to disbelieving friends that she could better Odetta.

The eldest child of a refinery executive, she was born in Port

Arthur, Texas, where she became the town's beatnik rebel, the girl from the Deep South who mixed with the blacks, who became known as "mad, silly Janis" and adopted the credo "Get stoned, stay happy and have a good time". For five years she drifted in the folk-beat world of Texas and New York, and finally made San Francisco at the time when Haight-Ashbury was at the beginnings of achieving global renown. Eventually finding her way into Big Brother & The Holding Company, the legend started from the day

Janis unleashed her vocal power with the band at the 1964 Monterey Festival.

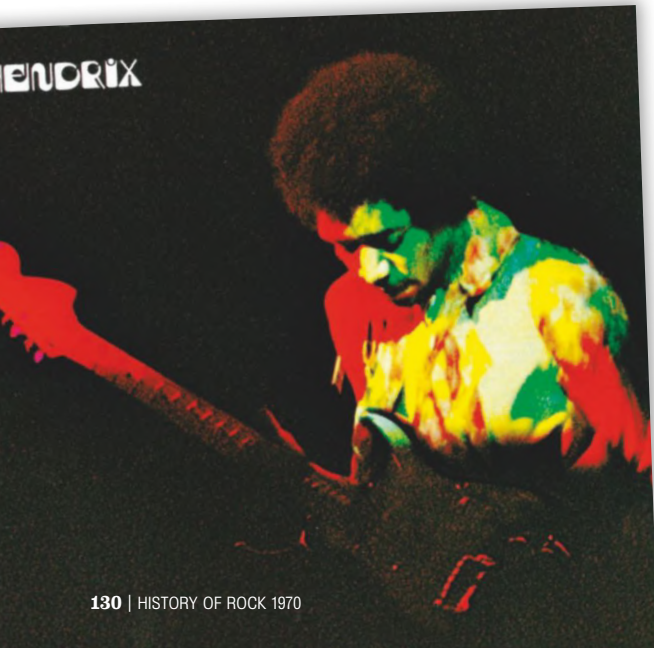
Her best recordings were made with Big Brother on the CBS album *Cheap Thrills* but a split became inevitable. Reviewers would praise Janis consistently

and just as consistently put down her band.

But the new band she formed never got it together either, and when that too went the same way as Big Brother, the Janis Joplin Full Tilt Boogie Band, not yet heard on record, came into being – Janis had, in fact, been in Hollywood recording an album with the new band under producer Paul Rothchild.

She used to say of her kind of living: "You mustn't compromise, and I'm living example that you don't have to. People aren't supposed to be like me, live like me, drink like me; but now they're paying me 50,000 dollars a night for me to be like me." Nick Logan

"People aren't supposed to be like me, drink like me"



"No desire to live anywhere but Britain"

NME OCT 10 The Rolling Stones deny rumours that they are planning to become tax exiles.

A REPORT IN A London evening newspaper, suggesting that the Rolling Stones are discussing a plan to emigrate to France, was denied by the group's financial advisers this week. The report intimated that the move was initiated by Prince Rupert Lowenstein, who is a member of the banking firm of Leopold Joseph & Sons Ltd. And the Stones were alleged to be seriously considering the idea of settling in France.

This week it became known that Leopold Joseph's are, in fact, advising the Stones on financial matters – although the company stresses that it should in no way be considered to be the group's business manager. However, despite Prince Rupert's involvement with the Stones, Leopold Joseph issued this comeback to the press report: "As far as we know, the Rolling Stones have no present intention of taking up residence abroad, and they have not expressed any desire to live anywhere other than in Britain."



John Peel: no recognition from the BBC for his polls-topping show

"Tony Blackburn has been slamming my programmes"

MM NOV 28 "If I said anything about his show, I'd get a very stiff memo," says Radio One DJ John Peel.

AN EXTRAORDINARY "ACCOLADE" for Tony Blackburn on Radio One this week left award-winning disc jockey John Peel, who compères *Top Gear*, "bemused" and disheartened. Last Sunday, Radio One devoted an hour's programme entitled *Pick of the DJs* to coverage of a poll conducted by *Reveille* magazine. In the poll, Tony Blackburn won the top Radio One DJ award and Michael Aspel won the Radio Two award.

In recent years both *Top Gear* and John Peel have won numerous awards, but their success has never been recognised by the BBC. John Peel told the *MM* this week, "Since *Top Gear* started there have been 14 polls run by various papers which have had a category for top Radio Show. Thirteen of these have been won by *Top Gear*. In spite of this, neither I nor the producers of the programme have ever received any acknowledgement from any of the controllers at the BBC. Not one word..."

"In the last few weeks Tony Blackburn has been publicly slamming my programmes, but if I said anything about the Tony Blackburn show, I would get a very stiff memo. It seems extraordinary to me that the BBC refuses to acknowledge the success of *Top Gear* in spite of winning all these polls."

A spokesman for the BBC told the *MM* this week, "This was a special programme which split *Pick Of The Pops* and which was to announce the results of the poll conducted by *Reveille*. This poll was purely and simply for Radio One DJs. I don't think an unfair proportion of the programme was given to Tony Blackburn."

➤ Kinks leader Ray Davies stars in his first acting role in a new television play called *The Long Distance Piano Player*, which is the first of the BBC's new autumn series *Play For Today*. The play will be screened – in colour – on October 15 at 9.20 pm on BBC1. In the play Ray takes the part of a young man setting a new world record for piano playing. Ray has composed two new songs called "Marathon" and "Got To Be Free",



and will also be heard playing Kinks tunes during the piano-playing marathon. **MM OCT 10**

➤ Suggestions that The Beatles are considering re-forming – without Paul McCartney, who would be replaced by another bassist – were discounted by an Apple spokesman this week. The rumours stemmed from a national press report, in which – in answer to a question about The Beatles playing together again – George Harrison had replied, "Maybe, but we'd have to get a new bass player." Dismissing the possibility, Apple said that it had been intended as a joke! He added that there is no news or comment on The Beatles at the present time. **NME OCT 18**

GETTY (2)

STONES EMIGRATING? No claim their advisers

Revolutionary

MM DEC 12 RIP, outré saxophonist Albert Ayler.

ALBERT AYLER, THE revolutionary jazz tenor saxophonist, is dead at the age of 34. His body was taken out of New York's East River. His body is still in the morgue of Kings County Hospital, Brooklyn, NY, pending a post mortem and coroner's report to determine cause of death.

Born in Cleveland, Ohio in 1936, Ayler was one of the most controversial figures jazz has produced. After playing in New York and Europe with Cecil Taylor in the early '60s, he made a series of recordings for the ESP label which had a profound effect on younger musicians.

Invariably surrounded by critical argument and frequent derision, Ayler continued to plough his own furrow until, last year, he issued an album called *New Grass*, on which he sang and played in a style which mixed his old approach with commercial rhythm & blues.

His career had been comparatively quiet for the last couple of years, and his personal appearances had grown infrequent. His last album, *Music Is The Healing Force Of The Universe* (Impulse), appeared last summer, but was not released in Britain. It featured Ayler playing bagpipes for the first time on record, and also Henry Vestine, guitarist with Canned Heat.



Albert Ayler on stage in 1966

“I am difficult to like”

IAN ANDERSON's vision for JETHRO TULL has piloted the group to stardom. But who is he – showman, musician or simply a pragmatic businessman? A plain-speaking person, he doesn't mind who he offends. “A lot of people think I am just a crud,” he says.

— NME OCTOBER 31 —

THERE CAN BE little doubt that Ian Anderson is Jethro Tull's greatest asset, yet paradoxically it might also be true to say that he's the group's and his own worst enemy. Much of the criticism that has been levelled at Jethro Tull – and that's a lot – can be indirectly traced back to a lack of audience understanding of the Anderson thought process, and that, in itself, is due as much to a failure on Ian's part to communicate as it is to the public to comprehend.

Whatever the reasons, the fact is that Ian Anderson, on stage the Great Entertainer, detracts from Ian Anderson, the Musician. And although the group has gone out of its way in the past to avoid being dismissed as a “joke band” – cutting down the stage theatricals, adding keyboard player John Evan – there are still many who, while maybe liking their act, refuse to take the music seriously.

It all comes down to this. If you turn in a good and exciting stage show that entertains, then there is a process of thinking that says it must be an act. If it's an act then it's rehearsed. If it's rehearsed it's mechanical. If it's mechanical it's sterile, and if the act is sterile then the music must be too.

Ian, whose contradictory behaviour off stage and on further confuses the issue, recognises the problem and agrees that the group's stage presentation can rub off against its music:

“Led Zeppelin get the same thing from the same people. Their critics are our critics. The people who put down Zeppelin are the same people who put down Jethro Tull. The people who think Zeppelin are contrived will think that we are contrived, while those who think they are exciting and relevant to today's society will accept us as relevant and exciting too. Maybe not in the same way – I like to think we are a little more controlled – but I hope it still has the same immediacy.” »

GETTY



Ian Anderson on stage in 1970: "The swirling coats and that... I express myself through these clothes"



Jethro Tull in 1970:
(clockwise from left)
Ian Anderson, Glenn
Cornick, Clive Bunker
and Martin Barre

Anderson quotes as typical of the problem an American Underground paper's review of *Benefit* which described the music as artificial, likened Ian's songs to washing machines and accused him of dictatorially stamping out solos at the very first signs.

"People see you on stage," he comments, "and think that you must have rehearsed it to make it that way, and that it all must be a bit of an act. And, you're right; they do look on your records in the same light. If they don't like your stage act and think it is theatrical then they are going to look on your records and think they are contrived and mechanical too.

"I personally don't like to think of what we do on stage as an act because the word 'act' conjures up ideas of contrivances to gain applause... it suggests something worked out for applause and appreciation. The fact is that everything I do or say on stage has been spontaneous at one time and if there is one movement I do every night it is because it is like conducting the music... it is part of the arrangement. Like the first time we do a new song nothing happens, apart from maybe I tap my foot, but as the song develops something will grow out of it."

Ian's style of songwriting doesn't abate the critics either, being a style that flies directly in the face of his contemporaries' moves into freer, longer and improvised compositions. He, in contrast, writes songs that are concise and often short, with a simple unpretentious lyric line, a beginning, middle and end. In short, he writes songs.

At his new London home, after a meal prepared by Jennie Anderson, Ian and I sat down in the lounge-cum-bedroom to talk about his introduction to, and thoughts about, music. A trumpet, violin and guitar were lying on the bed.

It was a guitar, in fact, an electric one, that was Ian's first instrument, played in a group formed at school with John Evan, then a drummer, and Jeffrey Hammond (of "A Song For Jeffrey", etc) on bass.

He wrote spasmodically in those early days, material to supplement the group's mainly second-hand repertoire drawn from the least known Liverpool groups – "the underground of their day" – and blues tracks found on records. Later they played Rolling Stones-type numbers and then switched to a Ray Charles/Jimmy Smith bag when John Evan left the drum seat to take up organ.

When Jethro Tull started, they played "other people's music... predictable blues stuff, things Mick Abrahams said we should play". There hadn't been time either for original material to be stocked up, because although Abrahams and Clive Bunker still had day jobs, Ian and Glenn Cornick, who had come to London from Blackpool together, were professional.

Playing "variations of 'Dust My Broom'", it wasn't until the band was a good few months old that the situation eased enough to allow them to write their own songs. At the time of the first album, *This Was*, those

songs were very blues-influenced – "jazzy blues". But a collision between Anderson and Abrahams was on. Mick didn't like Ian's songs and Ian didn't like his, that being one of the reasons why the guitarist left and conceived Blodwyn Pig.

From then on the unchallenged provider of Jethro material, Ian sat down to transcribe songs that had been flying around his head since months before. For the first time he was free to write as he wished – "There was no longer a necessity for them to be either bluesy or jazzy."

The result was *Stand Up*, and a set of compact, concise little songs that left Jethro Tull with an unmistakable and original style.

But although Ian accepts this, he sees the sound and the treatment as more responsible for the distinctive quality than the actual songs.

"They are linked by the fact that they use the same elements," he maintains, "but arranged in different way." And the elements? "Simplicity – like that of the blues or R&B era. Simplicity of the forthright approach, with variation of intensity from the simple song to the heaviest and rawest."

With a zest for knowledge in virtually every sphere of human activity, in music this has taken him deep into the intricacies of the subject. "I want to be conversant in all the techniques involved in writing,

arranging, producing, the whole bit," says Ian.

He talks music in terms of tone colours – there's a further analogy with art in the miniaturist quality of his songs – and feels that recorded works need to be a little deeper and more subtle.

"Whereas on stage you can get that colour by the visual effect of actually being there creating the music."

He had recently bought a trumpet when I met him, never having played one before. "I wrote a song on it the first day I had it," he told me proudly. He regards *Stand Up* in retrospect as being a little too contrived as far as the performance went and feels that *Benefit* was too much of a rushed job – although disagreeing with the previously mentioned review on the question of solos.

When we last met, Ian told me that he kept his lyrics to simple themes – himself, his friends, his work, Jennie – because he didn't consider himself qualified to comment on anything else. But on the next album he seems to be moving towards more involved themes. "Many of the songs," he says, "will have a relationship with each other, they will be able to be taken on two levels."

Switching on the tape to play me a track called "The Passenger", Ian rummaged through a pile of songbooks to find and read the lyrics. "You see, this one is about a man on a train but it can also be seen as drawing analogies between a passenger on a train and a passenger through life..."

And as if to ward off any suspicions I might be forming: "...But it's not pretentious; at least I don't think it will sound pretentious when you hear it. It's not like The Kinks making their potted little statements about men in bowler hats. It will also be a little more humorous as an album. There's a song called 'The Pool' (reads lyrics), which is about Blackpool and the sort of thing Ringo might sing. And then there are still the personal songs about me, like 'Wondering Aloud', which is a love song."

Often dissatisfied in the past, Ian feels that the new songs will be better for the group because for the first time since he started writing he no longer has to work to deadlines. The new songs he has been able to live with, to play back and listen to numerous times, and be sure of.

"I don't now have to say, 'Oh Christ, I've got to write something to finish off the album.' Working that way I've sometimes written songs and recorded them quickly and then afterwards wondered if they were the right songs for the group. Nowadays it is more relaxing. I also find it a lot easier to write in America now that Jennie can be with me."

The important thing to him, says Ian, is that people buy their records for the reasons they were made – "because we like the songs and enjoyed making it. It seems a bit silly to say it, but if the next album sold only 200 copies and those 200 people were still playing that record in five years' time, that would really knock me out. That is what I really want to do... to play music that people will remember. Music that will still have the same feel in the years to come and not just be the biggest thing of its particular year." Nick Logan

— NME NOVEMBER 7 —

ADMITTING THAT YOU don't know your subject may seem a strange way to open a profile article. But I must admit straight off that I don't know, or to be more specific don't understand, Ian Anderson. I know a good deal of what goes on on the surface, but any deeper than that is an area Anderson appears to reserve exclusively for a very small and long-standing circle of friends.

Because of this, and the fact that he rarely cares about being rude to people, he is an easy person to dislike. But, even if repulsion is the result, it is difficult not to be fascinated by the bewildering complexity of one of the ablest minds to devote itself to rock music.

A year ago I spent 11 days on the road with Jethro Tull in America and watched Ian at work under a variety of testing conditions; time and opportunity enough to allow insight into most personalities. But not his.

Although richly informative as to how the Anderson mind acts, the tour revealed little or nothing as to how it works. He is an enigmatic character, a 23-year-old rich in contradictions. The wild stage extrovert who on tour shuts himself off behind locked doors. The performer who will talk to and entertain with alarming confidence upwards to 18,000 people yet offstage will feign illness rather than get involved in arguments, who doesn't go to parties or clubs, who doesn't mix with other musicians and who has no time for either drugs or alcohol.

A few days before Jethro Tull left for their current American tour, we talked at the Andersons' new London home, a two-storey modern house which Ian and Jennie have crammed full of old, and often bizarre, curios and furnishings.

He countered my question as to whether he thought he was difficult to understand with: "I am difficult to be absolutely sure of, probably a difficult person to like because I don't mind offending people.

"If someone comes up and says, 'Do you want some hash?' or 'Do you want to come along to a party?' for example, it doesn't matter how you tell them that you are not interested, it will be a big blow to them. I offend people like that at the rate of one a day."

Most of this arises from people who see Ian Anderson on stage and fix preconceived ideas of what he should be like off stage. To journalists he realises he cannot communicate through and kids who come backstage to talk to the band, to give two examples, he finds it difficult to explain that he is not what they expect.

And he refuses to live a lie. "It does happen that people come backstage with the idea that I should be very friendly and open to them and a nice guy and they go away thinking I am not friendly and am a nasty guy, because unless I put on an act I have no way of getting through to them.

"I would rather hurt people in that way than offend them in a much more serious way by pretending that we have some area of communication between us when we haven't. A lot of people think I am just a crud, and I just have to live with it."

This refusal to live a lie raises one of the most obvious sides of the Anderson character, his unpretentiousness and his honesty. On the latter, he maintains: "In some ways this is a very mentally maiming life. You have to keep looking at yourself to see how honest you are, but in other ways it does tend to get easier rather than harder."

He is his own and the band's greatest critic, to a point where he will bend over backwards to avoid the impression of pretension. Mainly by choice, his is an isolated life; his friends can be counted on one hand. These tend

to be acquaintances of a very long standing. Apart from Jennie, who was working at Chrysalis' London office when they met, they include John Evan, the Jethro organist and pianist, and the famous Jeffrey, who Ian grew up with. Both were in his first group.

Ian tells the story of that group in his own inimitable style, part truth, part colourful exaggeration. He'd had an interest in pop before – seeing that kind



of life as an escape route if he failed his exams – but he didn't get going until the sixth form when he and Jeffrey went to a youth club and were amazed to see the local beat group surrounded by girls.

"There they were, all these fantastic birds, long hair, made up, false eyelashes and things, crowding round this group of scabby, spotty teenagers called Johnny Breeze & The Atlantics."

Ian and Jeffrey, their minds boggling at this glimpse into a world of glamour, set off home to hatch their plans. "Jeffrey had never had a girlfriend in his life," remembers Ian, "and saw this as his introduction to some kind of feminine attachment. He bought a bass guitar, a really pathetic £12 thing with an amp that came wrapped in a cardboard box. I had had a guitar since I was about 11. We started off as this three-piece Johnny Kidd-type group playing in front rooms. Little girls came to see us."

Ian's ambitions after he left art college were split between the music business, not necessarily performing but possibly working in a manager's or agent's office, and journalism. He approached the *Blackpool Evening Herald* to no avail. His recollections at the time were of wanting a job with some kind of freedom – "to be one's own boss to a certain extent, to be able to meet people".

Instead he stuck with the group, which had by then lost Jeffrey to the art world and at seven strong had become The John Evan Band, with Ian as singer and second-rate guitarist. Feeling the need to play another instrument, he bought the flute a few months before the band came down to London, selling the guitar to a local music shop. Refused cash for it, he settled for a flute and a microphone in exchange.

So The John Evan Band descended on London. "It was winter and very cold and dismal in Blackpool," remembers Ian, "and the way things were at home, the only thing I had to look forward to was sitting in the bedroom listening to the radio. And as things got more dismal and colder I decided it was time I moved off, feeling that some kind of move might at least bring some change of spirit."

Apart from Ian and Glenn Cornick, the band lasted two weeks before they went home. Regrouping with Mick Abrahams and Clive Bunker, the newly named Jethro Tull got themselves signed with Chrysalis bosses Terry Ellis and Chris Wright, who, for a time, were under the impression they still had a seven-piece band on their hands.

Glenn Cornick remembers how they used to turn up for gigs and make excuses about the three-man brass section getting delayed in accidents. Right from the beginnings, even when the band was playing unoriginal material, Ian's personality came through the music. At the start it was the floor-length

woollen overcoat, a parting present from his father when he left Blackpool, and his antics with the flute.

Strangely, he reasons away the "props" as a justification for him being on stage, and says he regarded his singing as "not enough". When friends then began to point out that his character on stage was becoming a valuable commodity, and suggesting he should play more into the role, Anderson says he found it quite frightening and dropped any kind of extrovert behaviour for some time.

"After that stage it crept back," he says "and when it did it had nothing to do with confidence. It had begun to be a personal expression of the music, something that amplified the music to me and I hope to the audience as well. It was a visual extension of the music... as are the clothes I wore, and still do, the swirling coats and that. I express myself through these clothes. It is like a miner putting on overalls because it is the right gear for the job."

The phrase "right gear for the job" is worth pondering on. One may wonder when Ian Anderson takes off the "right gear for the job" and, if it is a front, what lies behind it. Is it a façade to a shrewd young man who has recognised and used his assets to their utmost or the window on a rare and brilliant mind?

Jeffrey, when I gave him a lift home after the interview, agreed with me that Ian had changed little or nothing since Jethro Tull, but on the other hand, registered surprise when I said that I still didn't understand him.

Nick Logan •

"This is a very
mentally
maiming life.
But it tends to
get easier"

Their greatest
asset — but
is he also
Jethro Tull's
worst enemy?

1970

OCTOBER–DECEMBER



— LED ZEPPELIN —
**TRACK
 BY
 TRACK**
 — LED ZEPPELIN III —



"We'll never stop doing the heavy things"

MM OCT 24 Jimmy Page goes track by track through Led Zeppelin's *III*. "You've really done something evil!"

JIMMY PAGE ISN'T disturbed at any adverse criticism of *Led Zeppelin III* because he hasn't read any reviews. But he is aware that a number of Zeppelin fans would appreciate some backgrounding to the tracks of an album that has been greeted as either "their best yet" or "weaker rock".

At Jimmy's wooden boathouse home beside the Thames he spent a pleasant Saturday evening last weekend, listening to albums by the Cream, Jody Grind, Tony Williams and Don Ellis before getting round to a track-by-track review of his group's third endeavour to relate their musical feelings. He explained the origin of the songs and occasional quirks between tracks. And he hinted at the future, and the content of *Led Zeppelin IV*, already on the drawing board.

Immigrant Song

That's a voice at the beginning, incidentally, which somebody said was a wailing guitar. On stage this number has already developed into a much longer thing, with a full instrumental passage. The hiss at the beginning is a tape build-up, and then John Bonham comes

in. It's not really tape hiss, it's echo feedback. Robert wrote the lyrics to this one.

Friends

Again, Robert wrote the words. He did them all except on "Tangerine". The idea was to get an Indian style with the

strings. The string players were not Indian, however, and we had to make some on-the-spot changes. John Paul Jones wrote an incredible string arrangement for this and Robert shows his great range – incredibly high. He's got a lot of different sides to his voice, which comes across here. It has a menacing atmosphere. A friend came into the studio during the recording and it was bloody loud and he had to leave. He said, "You've really done something evil!" Moog synthesizer at the end, and that's a bottleneck string bass, with John Paul playing.

Celebration Day

The reason the voice is alone is the tape got crinkled in the studio and wouldn't go through the heads, so the end got ruined, but it worked out all right by using the idea of bringing the synthesizer down

in pitch to the voice. It was either that or leave the track out altogether. Why "Celebration?" It's saying, "I'm happy", that's all.

Since I've Been Loving You

This was a "live" track. John Paul plays organ and foot bass pedals at the same time. My guitar solo? It could have been better – but y'know. You are never satisfied with a performance, although of course there are those lucky musicians who can play it perfect every time. On these types of numbers John decides his own drumbeat to play. We might occasionally suggest the use of conga drums on a particular number, but he always fixes his own beat.

Out On The Tiles

This is Bonzo's riff [John Bonham]. Originally we had a set of lyrics to go with this relating to a night going out on the tiles.

Gallows Pole

A traditional song which stems from Lead Belly. I first found it by Fred Gerlach. He was one of the first white people on Folkways Records to get involved in Lead Belly. We have completely rearranged it and changed the verse. Robert wrote a set of new lyrics. That's John Paul Jones on mandolin and bass, and I'm playing the banjo, six-string and electric

Page on Zeppelin III...

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guitar. The bloke swinging on the gallows pole is saying wait for his relatives to arrive. The drumming builds nicely.

Tangerine

That's commonly known as a false start. It was a tempo guide, and it seemed like a good idea to leave it in - at the time. I was trying to keep the tempo down a bit. I'm not so sure now it was a good idea - everybody asks what the hell is going on. I did the pedal steel guitar and that's Robert doing the harmonies as well as lead.

That's The Way

Ah, this was written in Wales, where Robert and I stayed at a cottage. It was one of those days after a long walk and we were setting back to the cottage. We had a guitar with us. It was a tiring walk coming down a ravine, and we stopped and sat down. I played the tune and Robert sang a verse straight off. We had a tape recorder with us - that sounds a bit strange, but it was part of the kit - and we got the tune down. This wasn't recorded in Wales, if I gave that impression. The Los Paraguayos bit is the mandolin.

Bron-Y-Aur Stomp

That's an acoustic bass, not a double bass. It's like an acoustic guitar with a reasonable body. John Paul took the frets out and he plays it acoustically. This has got the rattling of the kitchen sink - we've got everything in it! We overdubbed Bonham on castanets, and spoons.

Hats Off To (Roy) Harper

There's that freaky echo. The voice sounds like that because it went through a vibrato amp. This came about from a jam Robert and I had one night. There is a whole tape of us hashing different blues things. Robert had been playing harmonica through the amp, then he used it to sing through. It's supposed to be a sincere hats off to Roy, because he's really a talented bloke who's had a lot of problems.

Which was Jimmy's favourite track? "I like 'Gallows Pole'. But there are others - the point is we had 17 tracks to choose from to put on the album. Some were written out at the cottage. Some show different stages of development. There was a lot like our early stuff - pretty powerful. And John Paul Jones wrote a piece that was all piano, which would have related to what's coming up in the future.

"This album was to get across more versatility and use more combinations of instruments. The next one will be just one long track on one side with these combinations of instruments, mandolin, and banjo and so on. It would last about 25 minutes with instrumental sections. It's still in the planning stages.

"We'll never stop doing the heavy things, because that comes out of us naturally when we play. But there is another side to us. The new album is totally different from the others and I see that it's obviously a new direction. The fourth album should be our best, and if it isn't, well, we might as well give up and retire with red faces. I haven't read any of the reviews, but people have got to give the LP a reasonable hearing.

"Everybody in the band is going through some changes. There are changes in the playing and in the lyrics. Robert is really getting involved in his lyric writing."

Where did the cover idea come from? "It was my idea to have a revolving wheel. I remembered those old gardening catalogues. You'd turn it to 'roses' and find out what kind of manure to use.

"There's a lot more to see on the wheel. When you get fed up with the LP there is the added pleasure of ripping up the cover to find out what's on the rest of the wheel."

ALBUMS

Derek And The Dominos

Layla POLYDOR

Well, not a bad little rock band. But wait, this is Eric Clapton and surely it should be considered differently? Why? Yes, why? Anyway, here we have a double album of songs that ranges from the magnificent to a few lengths of complete boredom. We have Hendrix's "Little Wing" played with such spreading beauty that Jimi would surely have clapped till his hands bled, and then we have "I Am Yours", a bossa that novas in pitiful directions.

Clapton and the Dominos have laid down an assortment of patterns so varied that it would easily take a small pamphlet to write an account of what has happened. Entertainment, certainly, and Eric and Duane Allman give about every superb essay possible on the playing of the electric guitar. Eric spits and licks, pumps and grinds in seven-minute strutting boogies (eg, the Billy Myles spread "Have You Ever Loved A Woman"), and then dawdles into love songs and lengths of pretty atrocious vocal work.

Title track "Layla" is by far the busiest screaming item, which burns to nearly eight minutes of brilliance, with rogue playing from all and some of the best Clapton you could ever wish to hear. One thing is certain - these are assorted love songs. Eric is into the love-licks, and you don't have to give this much of a hearing to know that he loves every damned minute of it. *Roy Hollingworth, MM Dec 12*

Peter Green The End Of The Game REPRISE

If Rudyard Kipling could have played in a rock band, then he'd have played with Pete Green, for this is jungle rock. It's spooky, and like a jungle it pulsates. Pete is joined by a splendid array of excellent musicians - Zoot Money (piano), Godfrey Maclean (percussion), Nick Buck (electric piano and organ) and Alex Dmochowski (bass), to create what can only be described as a lion of an album.

Many people must have wondered what had happened to Green, but wonder no more, for this is twice as good as anything he did with Fleetwood Mac. There are six tracks of pure, heady rock - no vocals but each instrument has words. There's parakeet guitar, screeching with much emphasis on wah-wah; there's Zulu warrior drumming, hunting, biting and nibbling. Dmochowski's bass sucks, slumps, steams and pumps into magnificent python riffs, and Zoot's piano is the playful but neurotic monkey that freaks in the trees.

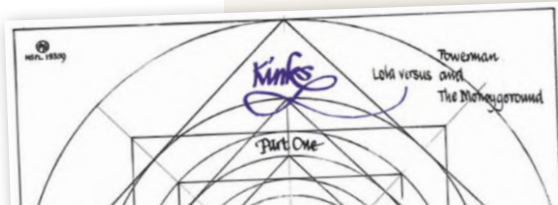
In the title track the band paint a terrifying jungle scrap between animals and a lion - which is Pete's sabre-tooth guitar? It reaches such turmoil that it almost upsets the mind - this is dangerous music, at times you can't correctly absorb what is going on. After the five tracks of jungle tension, there's a Pete Green clearing in "Timeless Time", another of his spaghetti-western soundtracks.

Certainly one of the most worrying albums of the year, and it's a delight to hear Pete's excellent playing again. *Roy Hollingworth, MM Nov 14*

Kinks Lola Versus Powerman And The Moneygoround PYE

Raymond Douglas Davies, taking a cheeky nibble at capitalism and the hurdy-hurdy pop playground. The songs of Davies are without doubt one of the best things to happen in straight fun and entertainment music this decade. You can't beat this man's hilarity, spiked with cunning, and here are 11 more of his Kinky ditties. "Top Of The Pops" is for me the ultimate track on the album. It tells a tale we all know of the pop fracas, but listen to Ray tell it in "You Really Got Me" Kink heavy prose. It's followed by "The Moneygoround", a barrel-organ slam at money distribution. There's also a slamming funk of an item from Dave Davies, the excellent mirth of "Apeman" and "Lola", which must surely rate as the funniest song of the year - give those lyrics another close hearing! Davies sings with a dimple in his jaw, a gap in his teeth, and maybe a tongue in his cheek. To quote his lyrics, given half the chance he'd rip off his clothes and

live in the jungle, which would surely be a terrible waste. The music's pure Kink simplicity - but it works. *Roy Hollingworth, MM Nov 28*



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CHRIS WALTER

Pete Townshend turns Pearly King for a rendition of *Tommy* at the BBC Television Centre, London, December 30 and 31, 1970

“We’ll
never
be the
ultimate
group”

After *Tommy*, THE WHO embrace raw rock’n’roll with *Live At Leeds*. For PETE TOWNSHEND, however, 1970’s successes prompt critical examination of himself and his band. “It was only since Cream broke up that we started making it...”

— NME APRIL 18 —

“I’M TRYING TO sophisticate our sound a little, make it a little less ear-rending. If we try and do anything clever-clever it could be a mistake.” Not the sort of thing one would expect to hear from Pete Townshend, but obviously a change is in store for The Who.

“The loudest part of the Who is the PA these days. We haven’t got any louder. Our PA is fifteen hundred watts and it just chucks it all out, that is what’s deafening people.”

Pete was talking to me at his home, opposite Eel Pie Island, where a commune is firmly ensconced. As he talked, two dogs chased about the room alternately leaping on one another and investigating my tea. The main talking point was *Live At Leeds*, the group’s upcoming “live” album which was recorded in that Northern town at the university.

“I’ve been planning a ‘live’ album for ages,” Pete began, “and we recorded all the shows on the last American tour thinking that would be where we would get the best material. When we got back we had 80 hours of tape and, well, we couldn’t sort that lot out, so we booked the Pye mobile studio and took it to Leeds. It turned out to be one of the best and most enjoyable gigs we’ve ever done.

“People always talk about The Who being good on stage. We’re all about visual pop flash, and in the past when we’ve recorded shows, tapes have sounded very grotty at the best. When I should have been playing guitar I’d have been waving my arms about like a windmill or when Keith should have been playing he’d have been yelling ‘ooh-ya ooh-ya’ at the top of his voice like Lennie Hastings.

“So what I want to do is sophisticate the sound a little. One of the troubles is Moon—he’s so deafening. If we do a two-and-a-half-hour show he just starts playing like a machine. I’m sure he puts out more watts than the rest of us put together!”

First warning me “crackles courtesy of Pye”, Pete played me some of the album, including Mose Allison’s “Young Man Blues”, which can easily be described as dynamic. He then spoke about *Tommy*, which has been hailed almost as the Messiah of records by many people.

“It was highly overrated because it was rated where it shouldn’t have been and it wasn’t rated where it should have been,” he commented. “It should be rated as a successful attempt to tell a story in rock music. I don’t listen to it. I enjoyed making it very, very much. We were going down the drain—we needed challenging after putting out corny singles like ‘Magic Bus’ and ‘Dogs’. Making *Tommy* really united the group and that was the good thing about it. The problem is that it has elevated The Who to heights they haven’t attained.”

Pete speaks about The Who sometimes as though the group hasn’t yet realised its full potential, and he obviously believes that he, Moon, The Wonder Boy, Roger Daltrey and John Entwistle need a pillar to lean on.

“We all need the group and to be in flux,” he explained. “It’s been a long partnership and we lean on it a lot. We need people to get at and argue with. It’s nice to have a set of individuals called The Who to write for. I got myself a problem with *Tommy*, something to get down to. The Who will always respond to a challenge. A group like us always needs as much prestige as it can get and at the moment that’s pop opera. On the Continent, *Tommy* was very successful and it brought a lot of kids who hadn’t seen us.”

During the brief spell that I worked for The Who as their publicist I visited Germany with them and learned the rigours of touring. At about that time each member of the group had frequent moans about it and swore to pack up touring. The pledge has been broken.

“It could have been America that changed our mind about touring,” Pete considered. “But all of a sudden people’s demand began to get higher. It used to be that if you had a hit record you’d get a full house and if you didn’t you’d

only get half-full houses. We waited three or four years for the new Beatles but they never came, so we said, ‘We’ll have to make do with what we’ve got but make it better.’

“We’ve always been influenced very highly by groups like the Stones and The Beatles and have made good use of it. Have you heard the Stones’ ‘live’ album? It’s influenced me a great deal. We used to tour and come back broke. We’d drink it away and use it up in broken instruments. We behaved so desperately that promoters thought it was only right and just to the public to steal these boys’ money.

“It was nice to discover that you can make money out of pop music... we couldn’t believe it when we came back from America with money in our pockets. Writing is very good for money, that’s why a lot of groups insist on writing their own material. With the Stones you have to wait until they’re going through a good period of songwriting before they bring out a record. Speedy (Keen) is a writer, a very good writer, and that’s what spurred me to form Thunderclap Newman.

“Behind every teenybopper group there’s a person like me who says, ‘You, you, you and you will get together and form a group and record this and have a hit.’ It takes a long time to learn to write songs. I don’t know why I started; I was just always writing things when we were playing all the pubs and terrible places.”

We adjourned to the recording studio along the passage and Pete played me a couple of numbers, one of which is almost destined to become Thunderclap’s next single. So, contrary to many rumours, the group will be having more records out. An album awaits release as well.

“They really make a very, very, very nice recorded sound and the other two that were

brought in were just to allow them to appear on stage, but they weren’t in the group proper. Jimmy McCulloch has a group together to play ‘live’. Speedy is constantly writing—he is the one who has the group most at heart—and Andy is recording his own music, which is eccentric.”

Speedy appeared through the door on cue and we discussed which number we all thought most suited for the next single. Then Pete had to go and eat his Cornish pastie before it got cold and I had a nice walk along the embankment in the rain. What an exciting pop world we live in.

Richard Green

— NME NOVEMBER 7 —

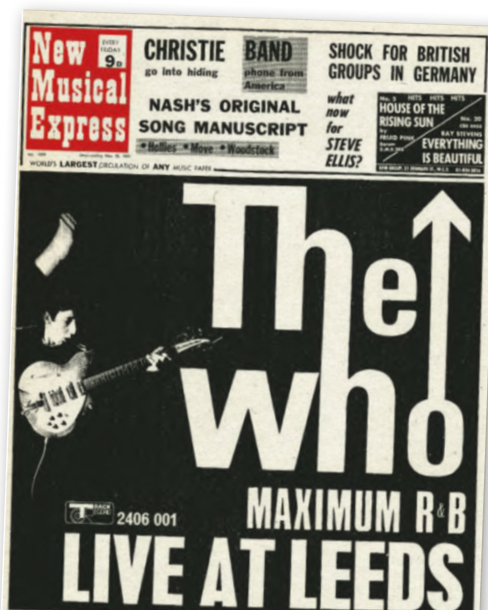
WHEN YOU COME to consider the amazing success story of The Who, the glittering superstar aura that surrounds the group and the adulation in which the four West Londoners are held by millions of fans throughout the world, it would seem safe to assume that Pete Townshend, their accepted leader, is a supremely confident man. But this is an unsound assumption.

When talking about his music, and his guitar playing in particular, Pete often reveals a degree of bewilderment and sometimes chagrin. He openly admits that groups like Led Zeppelin can hold The Who’s

advance back and he speaks with an air of hopelessness when on the subject of the late Jimi Hendrix. As we sat in the lounge of his riverside house at Twickenham, Pete recalled the days when The Who were still trying to find themselves. “I couldn’t find a model guitarist I could focus on,” he told me. “I used to like John Lee Hooker and Steve Cropper. I thought George Harrison was very lame. Keith Richards couldn’t tune his guitar—he still can’t! Somehow we became aware of The Yardbirds and we incorporated the things they were doing in our act without ever seeing them; it was done by word of mouth.”

“I incorporated something into my style which Clapton hadn’t discovered—this was feedback. I discovered it by accident because I wanted my amps to be bigger than I was, this was image consciousness again. I was the first person to put two Marshalls on top of one

“Tommy has elevated The Who to heights they haven’t attained”





Nice Lowrey Berkshire Deluxe TBO-1 organ and EMS VCS3 Mk1 synthesizer combo, sir: Townshend's home recording studio in Twickenham, London, 1970

another and this, to my mind, originated the stack. Because the amps were directly opposite the stack, when I turned round I got feedback.

"After that I never looked at another guitarist and worried; I wasn't intimidated any more. I was a guitarist and a songwriter and I could swing my arm, so I was confident."

When The Kinks and later The Beatles used feedback, Pete was more than pleased but his feeling of well-being wasn't to last long. Just when he believed that he was all set as a guitarist, Jimi Hendrix marched onto the scene.

"The first time I saw Eric with Cream was at a gig in a theatre somewhere. Very soon afterwards came Hendrix and I don't think anyone directly influenced me more. He was the first man to come in and walk all over my territory. I felt incredibly intimidated by that."

It didn't only happen once; there were several occasions when Jimi shook Pete.

"We had our own show on at the Saville and we were feeling very, very, very nervous about it," he admitted. "Kit Lambert made the terrible mistake of putting Hendrix on before us and when he ended by using feedback and dropping his guitar on the floor I was terribly hurt by nobody saying that he was copying what I'd been doing. My guitar smashing was an extension of feedback and arm swinging; Hendrix incorporated it in a very silky movement and the blues."

The next time Pete felt put out by Jimi was at one of the first mammoth American pop festivals. "Monterey – more Hendrix intimidation for me personally," he sighed. "It was right in the middle of the psychedelic era and we brought the place down with the smash-up routine. We went on before Jimi and he went on and did the same thing; again we felt cheated because our impact had been halved."

"It was only since Jimi stopped working a lot in the States and Cream broke up that we started making it. There's always been a hidden

audience for the guitarist; I think it's mainly younger boys that could make a guitarist a star overnight."

Of the period when Jimi suddenly happened, Pete says: "It was about that time that we really began to change. I became conscious of myself as a guitarist and started to write in a way that would allow myself more expression. We played a Murray The K show in the States with the Cream and we both had 10-minute spots in which to show ourselves. We made a far bigger impact

because of our smoke bombs and guitar smashing and things. There was a fantastic amount of paranoia; I was always conscious of myself as a guitarist when Eric was around. I made myself much, much more positive and used it as an expression."

"The news spread like wildfire about The Who but we didn't steam back in quick enough. By the time we went back to the States the Cream were superstars and we had to fight where we felt we didn't have to fight? We were always reviewed in the light of the Cream."

Just lately, Pete has begun to feel more satisfaction with the direction in which The Who is heading. He has witnessed a large number of changes during the group's career,

but now feels that if the rainbow's end is ever to be reached it may not be a much longer journey.

"We were so hyped up on our image that we couldn't see what was going on," he stated. "It's only since *Live At Leeds* and *Tommy* that we've balanced up our music. The reason why a Who performance is an exciting thing is that there is a lot of history there. You know that Keith is going to be excited, but you don't know in what way. »

"I was hurt by nobody saying Jimi was copying what I'd been doing"



"The Who have moved up the rungs of the ladder of success at an incredibly slow rate. There's an evolution in the group going on and now there's an evolution in the music—now we can hold our own against groups like Zeppelin who are completely musically based. We're breaking up the jinx of being a guitarist group."

"The first time I saw Zeppelin it seemed they were regurgitating all the musical clichés of pop. They are a group's group and now The Who are being accepted as a group's group. But we'll never be the ultimate group while there are groups like Zep around."

Occasionally Pete's train of thought seems to ramble a bit and he switches subjects about before the listener has had time to take in one thing at a time. When seen as the printed word, however, one of his rambles can give the reader an insight into Pete's complex mind and the way in which he likes to speak on a variety of subjects concerned with his music.

For example: "It was the image around the group and everything about it that enabled me to find myself as a guitarist and songwriter. I think about the Small Faces in the same way. None of them were particularly brilliant on their own but they were a very together group, they knew good music when they heard it. They didn't try to make individual statements."

"Eric always talks about his guitar and I always talk about rock and the ethics of rock and why it's lasted so long and what people get out of it. Eric had the stage act and I had the music and Jimi was all that rolled into one."

"Jimi doesn't need musical obituaries. It was either going to be a bomb dropping or Jimi Hendrix happening—people knew, they felt, something was going to happen. The impact he made was enormous. He was there; you didn't have to see him or hear him to know that it was a point in musical history."

"Keith Moon is so defined in what he does and the way he does it that he was never conscious of what he does and the way he does it that he was never conscious of anything until he started to figure in drummers' charts with people like Ginger Baker. He's never been a drummer's drummer, but today people say, 'Technically, I don't know what he does or the way that he does it, but it works.'"

"The Who will probably last longer than most groups but will probably never reach the status that these other groups have reached. If we go on at this rate we will be the biggest group in the world because slowly we're realising all our ambitions. We're a group that can pull it out of the hat yet again. I'd like it to reach the stage where Sinatra and Ella get 'Are They Still Stars?' features written about them because their latest record wasn't a hit. We had that said about us." *Richard Green*

— NME NOVEMBER 14 —

"**W**E KNEW WE were going to be stars. We entered the business to become stars, not to make a day-to-day business out of it. That was what was so exciting about the business about six years ago—everyone wanted to be as big as the Stones or Beatles."

Pete Townshend almost always achieves his ambitions and there is no doubt about the outcome of his bid for stardom. It has been a long, hard slog for The Who, with various other groups sometimes standing in their way. One of the most important factors in The Who's success is the length of time that Pete, Roger, Keith and John have been together. Not just as The Who or The High Numbers, but before then as school friends in Acton.

Because they know one another so well, they are able to make allowances for each other's mistakes and faults and the type of squabble that may have broken up a lesser group has been smoothed over by The Who whenever it has occurred. To understand the closeness between the



four members, one has to travel back in time several years to the days before The Who had even been conceived.

Pete's parents were both musical, his father playing saxophone in The Squadronaires and his mother singing with the band for a while before Pete was born.

"My father was essentially a pop musician in his day," Pete pointed out. "I dread to think what would have happened if I had been brought up in a classical family."

He recalled the time when he was only 13 months old and had to pretend to be two so that he could get in to Butlins ballroom at Filey to see his father play and how he met a Texan cowboy there.

"He promised me a harmonica, which I never got, and in the end I think I had to shoplift one a couple of years later," he admitted.

Pete sang in a church choir in Acton, "but I didn't have enough projection or a posh enough accent to get leads", but he still had no real outlet for his musical talents.

"There was a period when I was terribly negative. I didn't know what to do," he said. "I was proud of my father but I didn't like listening to his music on the radio, second-hand in a way. One of the things that fashioned the musical frustration for me was that my parents didn't have a piano or a record player, which is incredible for two musicians."

"They still only have a record player, which the kids play old Who records on and jump all over. An auntie on the Isle of Mann had a piano, but all the time I was searching for an instrument."

Through his father's connections Pete used to go along to press previews of films with his friend Graham Beard, and on one such excursion something happened that was to shape Pete's musical career. *Rock Around The Clock* did it for me," he revealed. "I hadn't been into

September 17, 1970:
Roger Daltrey and
Pete Townshend on
stage in Amsterdam

rock'n'roll before that, Beard got into Elvis Presley, who I had never liked. He got into the guitar and used to look in the mirror to act up. After a while, I decided the guitar was what I wanted.

"My granny got me my first guitar and it was a very, very, very bad one indeed, though it cost her a lot of money. It's important to get a good instrument for kids. I fought tooth and nail with it for a year and finally gave up because it was too bad."

He got a mandolin banjo from a friend of his father's, started to play trad jazz of all things and decided eventually that he could play with other musicians. John Entwistle and a chap called Phil Rhodes had a group going and they asked Pete to join. "I was 13 at the time and I'd been bugging about for two years on guitar without getting anywhere," Pete recalled with a smile.

"I knew they expected me to play, so I rushed out and got a chord book. They were fairly impressed, which I couldn't work out. Perhaps they thought if you could play three chords you could play the rest."

The group had a variety of names, like The Aristocrats, The Scorpions and the Confederates Jazz Band, and they used to go along and see Acker Bilk play a lot. Pete got a £3 Czechoslovakian guitar from his mother's antique shop and finally decided that the guitar was the instrument for him. By this time, John had made himself an electric bass guitar from a plank of wood and he and Pete formed a group with two boys from Acton County School.

"We played Shadows numbers, which must be the cliché story, but that's the way it was," Pete told me. "There just weren't any other groups around. I was terribly happy with it, people quite liked us and it

was incredibly exciting when we appeared in front of an audience. It gave me a new confidence – I hadn't made it very well with chicks and at the time when my mates started to get it together with chicks I was getting into the guitar and it became an obsession."

John left the group and joined Daltrey's Detours and then Pete joined as rhythm guitarist at John's suggestion. "It became a good social thing, the drummer's father ran us about in his Dormobile and we got a lot of seaside gigs. We did an audition at Peckham Paradise Club for £7 a night, which we thought was very good. Eventually we chucked out the drummer and his father manager."

Roger dropped the guitar and started singing, so Pete switched to lead guitar, "but I couldn't play properly and I built up a style around chords. My favourite group was Johnny Kidd & The Pirates with Mick Green on guitar. That's where we first heard R&B second-hand."

After a period with a manager who thought of the group as his pets and believed he could make them stars overnight, a recording audition with Philips cropped up. "Chris Parminter, who ran the audition, didn't like the drummer, so we kicked him out. From the point we found Keith it was a complete turning point. He was assertive and confident. Before then we had just been fooling about."

Through Peter Meaden and Guy Stevens, Pete got to hear Tamla Motown music and they played "Got To Dance To Keep From Crying" at the Scene Club near Piccadilly Circus. Pete wrote his first song, called "It Was You", which the foremost put on a B-side, but he still wasn't doing anything positive, he felt.

Kit Lambert became the group's manager and taught them about stage makeup and dyeing their hair – "slightly tarty at the time", as Pete puts it. "I'd already got into the arm-swinging bit and we were all dressed like



"From the time we found Keith it was a complete turning point"

mods," Pete went on. "The product of that era was 'I'm The Face' and 'Zoot Suit', both lifted from R&B records with the words changed. They sold about three copies; Philips could make a fortune by issuing them in the States today.

"We had a music that other groups hadn't discovered yet. The Beatles and the Stones impressed us, but they had such a defined image that we thought there was a gap there. We were after a slightly more sophisticated sound.

"We did an EMI audition and I was compromised into writing, which was a thing I wasn't keen to do. I was very much into an image thing – I lived and breathed image. That was the key word in those days. Then I heard 'You Really Got Me' on the radio and instantly I knew that The Kinks had filled the hole we wanted to fill. That sort of music always came from over the water; I thought that if you want the heavy stuff you could write it yourself.

"I wrote 'I Can't Explain' just for The Who and it remains one of the best things I've ever done. It was based on 'You Really Got Me'; it just didn't have the modulations. I was influenced more by The Kinks than any group; we weren't fans of theirs, we just liked them.

"Shel Talmy signed us and it was then I really got into writing. I felt I was intimidating the group by writing for them. I rowed Roger in on 'Anyway, Anyhow, Anywhere', revising the lyrics, but that didn't last; he started believing he'd actually written it.

"The next positive thing was 'My Generation' to show what was going on. It was as much defiance to the group as a public thing. I felt I was the only person in the group that knew about dope. Keith was on pills, but I had heard about pot. I alienated myself from the group and this gave me a pivot point to stand back and write and then join them in playing.

"Lo and behold, Lambert started producing our records. He spent incredible amounts of time with us and he changed my life fantastically. He'd listen to my demos and I'd make alterations. When we met, I was the young dropout and Lambert was the complete opposite, an ex-public schoolboy and very respectable – now we've completely switched roles.

"A lot of people would think I'm terribly square sitting here in my comfortable suburban house with my wife and a baby. There had got to be a point where Lambert and I come together in our identities again soon."

Returning to his recollections of the build-up of The Who, Pete remarked, "When we had a hit with 'Happy Jack', which was a very different sound for us, it became obvious that the musical direction of the group was going to change. I'd gone back to being influenced by the Stones again. On our second LP, which is still about our best, we really discovered The Who's music for the first time, that you could be funny on a record. Entwistle wrote for the first time; he wrote 'Whisky Man' and 'Boris The Spider'. My reign set aside as an individual from the rest of the group was over and the group was becoming a group. It was only then we started to work musically together."

Things snowballed until The Who reached the envious position they are in today. The outlook is rosy and everyone concerned with the group is perfectly happy. What, then, does Pete see for the future?

"I'd like The Who to continue writing and playing hard rock," he replied. "There's not another group that is as complete a group as The Who in every respect. There's no question, I think, of the group ever being happier doing anything else. If the group stopped I just don't know what I'd do. I could make a living and be happy, but not so exhilarated." *Richard Green* •

"When my mates started to get it together with chicks I was getting into the guitar – it became an obsession"

"WE KNEW we were going to be stars. We entered the business to make a day-to-day business out of it. That was what we business about six years ago, everyone wanted to be as big as the new. Townshend almost always"

THE HISTORY OF ROCK

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Readers' letters

MM OCT-DEC Mourning Hendrix, bemoaning McCartney and other heavy scenes.

COME UNTOGETHER

I once thought Paul McCartney was God. My! How things have changed, though I have yet to discover whether it is myself who has outgrown him or he who has become so conceited that he really thinks the average pop fan is really concerned with whether he and the other Beatles will ever play together again.

No, we've all grown out of that by now, the heartache we once felt has gone, leaving only a little scar which reminds us that one Beatle broke away, leaving the others to wonder why.

Paul is obviously too bound up in his own self-importance to notice that no one cares any more. **MISS SAPPWORTH, 38 Stafford Place, Peterlee, Co Durham (MM Sept 12)**

"Dear Mailbag", wrote the great McCartney. I agree, being a fan since '63, he is brilliant. But as a person with feelings and someone who shows consideration he is sadly lacking.

He's become terribly arrogant since all his beloved fans helped him grab his millions. He hasn't thought about those who realise that no other group can ever hope to replace The Beatles.

Paul, the one who's taking the part of the spoiled brat and the one who wants everything his way. **SELKIRK, 136 Colston Street, Newcastle Upon Tyne (MM Sept 12)**

So, once again Paul McCartney has roared. It's a pity. A great many people had hoped that he would have put aside his anger, or disenchantment, or whatever, and say that, yes, he would come together with the other Beatles to put out some more music into this not-too-happy and altogether imperfect world.

If, however, Paul is not to be persuaded, then perhaps get together with Billy Preston, with whom they have made beautiful music in the past. **ALEXANDER BROWN, Darums Capricornus Musicus Company, 113 Valley Woods Road, Townhouse, 93 Don Mills 401, Ontario, Canada (MM Sept 12)**

BEYOND REPLACEMENT

It is perhaps just that Jimi Hendrix should die in England. We took him into our heads, and our hearts – and probably launched him

into the beginning of what was to be the cause of the end.

He was a "child of God," a minstrel of our time. The world won't miss him, but we will. I shall never forget him. **PIVES, 2a Tyndall's, Hindhead, Surrey (MM Sept 26)**

The death of Jimi Hendrix is a great shock to me and a huge loss to the Music World! Jimi was undoubtedly the most inventive rock guitarist in the world, with a tremendous potential which will never now be realised.

Hendrix may have been musically mixed up of late, but his playing could show a beautiful fluidity and sensitivity, as on the highly underrated "Up From The Skies" off the *Axis...* LP and "Red House" from the first album.

There's no point in squabbling over who is the best rock guitarist now, we've just lost him. And who can take his place? **TONY NEALE, 29 Kensington Gardens Square, Queensway, London W2 (MM Sept 26)**



Jimi Hendrix, who crashed his way to fame in 1966 with "Hey Joe", has departed just as suddenly. Music just can't be the same, he is beyond replacement.

The only three-piece ever to compete with Noel, Mitch and Jimi was Cream, and all that's left of both is records – sadly not enough. His plans for a new music, which never reached maturity, I'm sure, would have resulted in further proof of his supremacy.

He said that when he died he wanted everyone to carry on listening to his records and remember him. So please all go out and buy *Band Of Gypsies* and say 'Farewell' as we said "Hello" by making him No 1. **GEOFF BULL, 2 Church Hill Street (MM Sept 26)**

PEEL: HOUSEWIFE'S CHOICE

I am a humble housewife. "A great hit among housewives," writes Chris Welch. Does he imagine we are all Jimmy Young lovers, ready to fall into paroxysm of delight at any slushy ballad? Lots of us aren't. In fact I've never met anyone who actually admits to even liking Jimmy Young. The millions of us that the BBC really reliably informs us listen to him every morning? Well, perhaps we haven't much choice. It's either that, school broadcasts, or switch off.

That leaves us up to our apron strings in Jimmy Young whether we like it or not. I've switched off for months now (and been a new woman!) Why not put John Peel on in the mornings? Well, I don't think his "selective" audience would relish listening alongside us ballad-loving housewives. He'd probably lose his musical snob value.

And the housewives might actually like it if given a choice. Then we'd all be able to quibble about who is the best guitarist, etc, wouldn't we? Anyway, I know Chris Welch enjoys making sweeping generalisations. It's part of his charm – but give the housewives a rest for a bit. **JANET DALWOOD, Greenleigh, Pen-y-Bryn, Brecon (MM Oct 3)**



TURN IT UP!

The increasing trend among groups like Led Zeppelin or the Flying Burrito Bros towards quiet, acoustic music is a bad one. Many of these groups say rock is getting stale and stereotyped, and is also too loud; and that their music offers a fresh alternative. However, acoustic guitar means, almost inevitably, folk-style music.

However pleasant and "easy on the ear" this is, it is a very limited medium which is a cul-de-sac as far as musical development goes; admittedly many rock groups are stale and stereotyped, but there is, in the long run, far more potential for progression in rock music than in folk.

It lies with the rock and jazz-rock groups to get music out of its present stagnant pool – not the acoustic groups, who are trying much too hard just to be different. **NMAYFIELD, 5 Pytte House West, Clyst St George, Exeter, Devon (MM Nov 7)**



1970

MONTH BY MONTH



Coming next... in 1971!

SO THAT WAS 1970... Hope you found some good vibes. But that's far from it from our reporters on the beat. The staffers of *NME* and *Melody Maker* enjoyed unrivalled access to the biggest stars of the time, and cultivated a feel for the rhythms of a diversifying scene; as the times changed, so did they. While in pursuit of the truth, they unearthed stories that have come to assume mythical status.

That's very much the territory of this monthly magazine. Each month, *The History Of Rock* will be bringing you verbatim reports from the pivotal events in pop culture, one year a month, one year at a time. Next up, 1971!

JOHN LENNON

"*IMAGINE WILL SHOW* 'em." It's a confident and garrulous Lennon who returns to the public eye in 1971. As happy as he is with Yoko and with his music, he also takes the time to write an open letter expressing his bitterness over Paul McCartney's role in ending The Beatles. "Who took us to court and shat over us in public?"

THE FACES

THE FACES ARE one of the best British bands, but they can't seem to sell any records. Does it worry them, when they can please a crowd the way they do? No it doesn't. "There's been nights when we've gone on sober," says Ian McLagan. "But there's not much chance of it happening..."

ELTON JOHN

MAN AND MYTH. Entertainer and songwriter. Rock'n'roller and morose poet. Can the star hope to reconcile his conflicts? A series of frank interviews get to the bottom of Reginald Kenneth Dwight, and uncover the working of the John-Taupin partnership.

PLUS

LED ZEPPELIN!

MARC BOLAN!

MONTY PYTHON!

THE HISTORY OF **ROCK**

Every month, we revisit long-lost *NME* and *Melody Maker* interviews and piece together *The History Of Rock*. This month: 1970 — the year where things went dark and heavy. “I tell you to enjoy life/I wish I could/But it’s too late...”



Relive the year...

**THE WORLD WENT MAD OVER
BLACK SABBATH'S *PARANOID***

THE WHO WERE LIVE AT LEEDS

THE BEATLES WENT THEIR SEPARATE WAYS

...and JONI MITCHELL, NICO, THE WHO, THE KINKS,
ROLLING STONES, LED ZEP and many more shared
everything with *NME* and *MELODY MAKER*

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